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# ଉତ୍କଳଗୌରବ-୨୦୦୭

( ଚତ୍ୱାରିଂଶତ୍ତମ ଅର୍ଘ୍ୟ )

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# ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘର ପୃଷ୍ଠପୋଷକ ସଭ୍ୟଗଣ

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୨୨ । ଶ୍ରୀ ମିହିର ରାୟ

# PRAGATI UTKAL SANGHA : A PROFILE

## A BRIEF HISTORY

Pragati Utkal Sangha, established in 1958 by 50 senior operative trainees of Rourkela Steel Plant, is one of the oldest socio-cultural organizations of Rourkela. In 1959 a small company house was allotted to them and it started functioning there under the Presidentship of Sri Naresh Chandra Nayak. Presently it has 933 life members of whom 700 are employees of Rourkela Steel Plant.

The original objectives of the Sangha were the promotion and propagation of the language, literature, culture and traditions of Utkal in multilingual society of Rourkela through running a library, organizing literary functions, cultural shows, celebration of festivals and bringing out publications. In course of time, the objectives have been expanded to include historical and literary research, publishing of hitherto unpublished works of famous Oriyas and inspiring the new generations with the noble ideals of our past leaders. All this would lead to the development of Utkal as a vibrant constituent state of mother India.

To carry out all its activities and for constructing its own building, the Sangha was allotted one acre of land in Sector-7 behind Chinmay School on lease basis in 2001. With grants from MP LAD fund (Contributions from honourable MP's Mr Baijayanta Panda, Mr. Pyari Mohan Mohapatra, Justice Ranganath Mishra) and Raja Ram Mohan Library Foundation, donations from members and individuals the ground floor of the building has been completed and the first floor is under construction.

## ACTIVITIES

**Library :**

- The Sangha's library is one of the largest in Orissa and the largest private library of Rourkela. It has presently about 40,000 books in Oriya, English, Hindi, Sanskrit and Bengali including many rare reference books essential for research scholars. It has also won a number of awards as one among the best libraries of Orissa.

**Publications :**

- Till today 18 books have been published, 4 in English and 14 in Oriya, all containing valuable articles based on rare manuscripts / material from different archives and private collections. **Madhusudan : The Legislator** published in 1980 is a compilation of speeches of Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das and is now recognized as a major reference book. Complete Works of Raja Basudev Sudhaladeba and Sachidananda Tribhuban Deb of Bamra, **Utkal Sammilani Vol-I** and **John Beames & Orissa** are its major publications.

- Every year since 1968 a souvenir is published on the occasion of Utkal Divas / Madhusudan Jayanti containing valuable articles in Oriya and English pertaining to the history and culture of Orissa.

**Utkal Gourab Statue :**

- The life-size bronze statue of Utkal Gourab Madhusudan at Rourkela Railway Station Square, one of the landmarks of present day Rourkela was installed by the Sangha in 1976 and it was inaugurated by the then Chief Minister Shrimati Nandini Satapathy. Not only was this the first statue of its kind in Rourkela but also it was one of the first few in the whole of Orissa. Funds for the State were raised from the public by door-to-door collection.

**Major Celebrations :**

- On 1st April 1968, the Sangha celebrated "Utkal Divas and Madhusudan Jayanti" in Rourkela in a big scale. This was the first big celebration of Utkal Divas in Orissa. Now it has spread to every nook and corner of the state. Here in Rourkela, Utkal Divas is a joint celebration today by Government and Non-Government organizations.
- Every year on 28th April, Madhusudan's birthday, the Sangha celebrates Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Jayanti in a big scale.

**Other Regular Activities :**

- Jayadev Jayanti, Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Deva Jayanti, Pandit Nilakantha Jayanti, Gandhi Jayanti, Gopabandhu Jayanti, Biju Pattanaik Jayanti, Death anniversaries of Madhusudan Das and Dr. Nabin Kumar Sahu are observed.
- Organising Multi-Lingual Kavisammilani, Narikavi Sammilani, Symposium / Seminar on current affairs, Staging of social and historical dramas, Madhusudan Essay and Debate competition, Pandit Nilakantha Quiz competition, Veda Competition, Odissi Dance and Song competition.
- Organising Ghanshyam Memorial Volleyball Tournament, Inter High School Cricket Tournament, Junior and Senior Bridge Tournament, Junior Chess Tournament.
- Medical Camps are being organized in its premises and also in different slum areas by the Sangha.

**Institutions of Prizes and Awards :**

- Madhusudan Memorial Gold Medal for the topper of the Master in Sociology Examination of Sambalpur University.
- Madhusudan Memorial Cash Award for the topper in LL.B. Examination of Berhampur University.
- Madhusudan Memorial Award and Gopandhu Memorial Award, to be conferred to the topper amongst the tribal students of Sundargarh in UP and ME Examination on the occasion of Madhusudan Jayanti.
- Other prizes to the successful participants of different competitions are awarded on the occasion of Madhusudan Jayanti.

# ଉତ୍କଳ ଗୌରବ ମଧୁସୂଦନ ଦାସଙ୍କ ୧୬୦ତମ ଜନ୍ମତିଥି ସମାରୋହର ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ଅତିଥିଗଣ

**ତା ୨୮.୦୪.୨୦୦୭ରିଖ, ଶନିବାର**

ପୁରୋଧା : **ପ୍ରଫେସର ନିରଞ୍ଜନ ପଣ୍ଡା**
ମାନ୍ୟବର ଅଧକ୍ଷ, ପଶ୍ଚିମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବିକାଶ ପରିଷଦ

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଅତିଥି : **ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ଭୈରବନାଥ ସିଂହ**
ପରିଚାଳନା ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶକ, ରାଉରକେଲା ଇସ୍ପାତ କାରଖାନା

ସମ୍ମାନିତ ଅତିଥି : **ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ସାରଦା ପ୍ରସାଦ ନାୟକ**
ମାନ୍ୟବର ବିଧାୟକ, ରାଉରକେଲା

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ବକ୍ତା : **ଡକ୍ଟର (ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ) ନିବେଦିତା ମହାନ୍ତି**
ପ୍ରଖ୍ୟାତ ଐତିହାସିକା

## ଉତ୍କଳ ଗୌରବ ସ୍ମୃତି ଓ ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ସ୍ମୃତି ପୁରସ୍କାର ବିଜେତାଗଣ

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ଡିଭାଇନ ଲାଇଫ୍ ଏକାଡ଼େମୀ, ସେକ୍ଟର-୧, ରାଉରକେଲା

ଉତ୍କଳମଣି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ସ୍ମୃତି ପୁରସ୍କାର : ଶ୍ରୀମାନ୍ ରାଜନ୍ ବଡାଇକ,
ବାଜିରାଉତ ଶିକ୍ଷା ସଦନ, ସେକ୍ଟର-୩, ରାଉରକେଲା

# ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘର ୨୦୦୬-୦୭ ବର୍ଷପାଇଁ କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତାଗଣ

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|---|---|
| **ଉପଦେଷ୍ଟା** | ଶ୍ରୀ ସାରଦା ନାୟକ, ବିଧାୟକ, ରାଉରକେଲା |
| | ଶ୍ରୀ ନରେଶ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନାୟକ |
| | ଶ୍ରୀ ଅଜିତ ଦାସ, ପ୍ରାକ୍ତନ ବିଧାୟକ |
| | ଡାକ୍ତର ଗୋକୁଳାନନ୍ଦ ସାହୁ |
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| | ସୁଶୀଲ କୁମାର ମିଶ୍ର |
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| **ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ସଂପାଦକ** | ଅଶୋକ କୁମାର ବଳ |
| **କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ସଂପାଦକ** | ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ କୁମାର ଦାସ |
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| | କାହ୍ନୁଚରଣ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ |
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# ସୂଚୀପତ୍ର

# ସମ୍ପାଦକୀୟ

ଆଜିକୁ ଚାଳିଶ ବର୍ଷ ହେଲା, ରାଉରକେଲାର ଏହି ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ 'ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘ', ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଏକ ସ୍ମରଣିକା/ମୁଖପତ୍ର ପ୍ରକାଶ କରି ଆସୁଅଛି । ଉତ୍କଳଗୌରବ ମଧୁସୂଦନଙ୍କ କୀର୍ତ୍ତି ଓ ସ୍ମୃତିଚାରଣ ଏହାର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଧ୍ୟେୟ ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ, ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ଏହି ସ୍ମରଣିକା, ମୁଖପତ୍ରର ନାମ ରଖାଯାଇଛି 'ଉତ୍କଳ ଗୌରବ' । ୧୯୬୮ ମସିହାରୁ ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘର ଏହି ମୁଖପତ୍ର ମଧୁସୂଦନଙ୍କ ସଂପର୍କରେ ବହୁ ନୂତନ ତଥ୍ୟ ଓ ଆଲୋଚନା ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବା ସହିତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ବିବିଧ ଦିଗ ଉପରେ ଆଲୋଚନା/ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାଲୋଚନାମାନ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ କରିଛି; ବହୁ ନୂତନ ତଥ୍ୟ ଓ ଉପାଦାନ ପ୍ରଥମଥର ମାଙ୍କ ବିଦ୍ୱତ ମଣ୍ଡଳୀଙ୍କ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ସମ୍ମୁଖରେ ଉପସ୍ଥାପନ କରିଛି । ୧୯୮୭ ମସିହାଠାରୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ବର୍ଷ ଏହି ମୁଖପତ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଓ ଇତିହାସର ଏକ ବିଶେଷ ବିଭବ ଉପରେ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଆରୋପ କରିଛି କିମ୍ବା ଏକ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ଉପାଦାନକୁ ଲୋକଲୋଚନକୁ ଆଣିଛି । ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଜଣେ ପରମ ହିତୈଷୀ ଜନ ବିମସ୍‌ଙ୍କ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସଂପର୍କିତ ରଚନାବଳୀର ଏକ ସଂକଳନ ଏହା ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଥିଲାବେଳେ ଗତବର୍ଷ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ପ୍ରଥମ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ପତ୍ରିକା 'ଉତ୍କଳ ଦର୍ପଣ'କୁ ଏହା ପୁନଃ ମୁଦ୍ରଣ କରି ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସାହିତ୍ୟର ଏକ ହଜିଲା ରତ୍ନକୁ ପୁନରୁଦ୍ଧାର କରିଥିଲା ।

ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଭାଷାର ମାନକୀକରଣ ତଥା ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ ପାଇଁ ଦୁଇଟି ସାଧନର ଭୂମିକା ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ସେ ଦୁଇଟି ହେଲା : ବ୍ୟାକରଣ ଓ ଅଭିଧାନ ବା ଶବ୍ଦକୋଷ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାରେ ଶବ୍ଦକୋଷ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତିର ଇତିହାସ ଦୀର୍ଘ ନୁହେଁ । ପ୍ରାଚ୍ୟ ରୀତିରେ ସଂକଳିତ ପ୍ରଥମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅଭିଧାନ ହେଉଛି, ଉପେନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜଙ୍କ 'ଗୀତାଭିଧାନ' । ପ୍ରାଚ୍ୟରୀତିରେ ସଂକଳିତ ଅଭିଧାନର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଦୃଷ୍ଟାନ୍ତ ଆମକୁ ମିଳେନାହିଁ । ପାଶ୍ଚାତ୍ୟ ରୀତିରେ ସଂକଳିତ ଓ ଆଧୁନିକ ଆଦର୍ଶରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ପ୍ରଥମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶବ୍ଦକୋଷ ହେଲା : ମୋହନ ପ୍ରସାଦ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କର 'Vocabulary' । ଏହି ପୁସ୍ତକଟିର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ଐତିହାସିକ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ହେଲା, ଏହା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷାର ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ମୁଦ୍ରିତ ପୁସ୍ତକ । ଏହି ପୁସ୍ତକଟିକୁ ଉଦ୍ଧାର କରାଯାଇ 'ଉତ୍କଳ ଗୌରବର'ର ଏହି ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ମୁଦ୍ରଣ କରାଯାଇଛି ଓ ଏହି ଐତିହାସିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକୁ ସଂପନ୍ନ କରିଛନ୍ତି ଡକ୍ଟର ଗୌରାଙ୍ଗ ଚରଣ ଦାଶ । ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘ ତରଫରୁ ଡକ୍ଟର ଦାଶଙ୍କୁ ମୁଁ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରୁଅଛି ।

ପ୍ରଫେସର ଅମିୟ ଦେବ ଜଣେ ଆନ୍ତର୍ଜାତୀୟ ଖ୍ୟାତିସମ୍ପନ୍ନ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ଓ ଗବେଷକ । ତୁଳନାତ୍ମକ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସଂପର୍କରେ ତାଙ୍କର ପୁସ୍ତକାବଳୀ ଓ ଗବେଷଣାତ୍ମକ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧଗୁଡ଼ିକ ବହୁ ପରିଚିତ । ପ୍ରଫେସର ଦେବଙ୍କର ଏକ ଅପ୍ରକାଶିତ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧ "Approaching Oriya Literature as a Non-Oriya Indian" ଏହି ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ପ୍ରକାଶିତ । ଫକୀରମୋହନ ଓ ଗୋପୀନାଥଙ୍କର ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ଓ ଆନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ରଚନା ଅନୁବାଦ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ କରି, ସେସବୁ ସଂପର୍କରେ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ଦେବ ଗଭୀର ଅନ୍ତର୍ଦୃଷ୍ଟିସଂପନ୍ନ ଆଲୋଚନା କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧଟି କଟକସ୍ଥିତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗବେଷଣା ପରିଷଦରେ ତୃତୀୟ ବିଶ୍ୱନୀଡ ବକ୍ତୃତା ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ସଂପୃକ୍ତ ଅଭିଭାଷଣକୁ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଅନୁମତି ଦେଇଥିବାରୁ ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘ 'ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗବେଷଣା ପରିଷଦ'ର ସଭାପତି ଡକ୍ଟର କୃଷ୍ଣଚରଣ ବେହେରା ତଥା ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତାଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ କୃତଜ୍ଞ ।

ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘର ଏହି ମୁଖପତ୍ର କେବଳ 'ଉତ୍କଳଗୌରବ' ନାମରେ କେବଳ ନାମିତ ନୁହେଁ, ଉତ୍କଳ ଗୌରବଙ୍କ ସ୍ମୃତି ଓ ଆଦର୍ଶର ପ୍ରଚାର ପାଇଁ ଓ ତାଙ୍କ ସଂପର୍କରେ ମୌଳିକ ଗବେଷଣା ପାଇଁ ସବୁବେଳେ ଚେଷ୍ଟିତ । ଏହି ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ମଧୁସୂଦନ ଗୋଟିଏ ସ୍ମୃତିଚାରଣ ଓ ପାଞ୍ଚଟି ପତ୍ର 'ଉତ୍କଳ ଦୀପିକା'ର ଜୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପୃଷ୍ଠାରୁ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରାଯାଇ ପୁନଃମୁଦ୍ରିତ । ଏହି ସମସ୍ତ ରଚନାରୁ ମଧୁସୂଦନଙ୍କ ବନ୍ଧୁପ୍ରୀତି, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ନାଟକ ଓ ରଙ୍ଗମଞ୍ଚ ସହିତ ତାଙ୍କର ଆବେଗିକ ସଂପର୍କର ଯେଉଁଳି ପରିଚୟ ମିଳେ, ଠିକ ସେହିପରି ଇଜିପଟ୍‌ରୁ ଲିଖିତ ଦୁଇ ପତ୍ରରୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଇତିହାସବୋଧ, ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟଚେତନା ଓ ପରମ୍ପରା ପ୍ରୀତିର ପରିଚୟ ମିଳିଥାଏ । ମଧୁସୂଦନଙ୍କ ଇଂରାଜୀ ଓ ଓଡ଼ିଆ, ସମସ୍ତ ରଚନାବଳୀ ଏକତ୍ର ସଂକଳିତ ହୋଇପାରିଲେ, ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ପ୍ରଜନ୍ମର ଗବେଷକମାନେ ତାଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ନୂତନ ଧରଣର ଆଲୋଚନା କରିପାରନ୍ତେ ।

ଆଉ ଅଳ୍ପ କେତେମାସ ପରେ 'ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘ' ତାହାର ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜୟନ୍ତୀ ପାଳନ କରିବ । ପଚାଶ ବର୍ଷ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଅସ୍ମିତାର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଏହି ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଅନେକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିଛି । ଭବିଷ୍ୟତରେ ତାହାର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟଧାରା ଆହୁରି ବଳିଷ୍ଠ ହେଉ, ଏହାହିଁ କାମନା ।

# ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘ

ଫକୀରମୋହନ ନଗର, ସେକ୍ଟର-୭

ରାଉରକେଲା-୭୬୯୦୦୩

ଫୋନ୍ : (୦୬୬୧) ୨୬୪୦୧୪୩

*କେତୋଟି ଅଭୁଲା ପ୍ରକାଶନ*

| *କ୍ର.ସଂ* | *ପୁସ୍ତକର ନାମ* | *ଲେଖକ/ସଂପାଦକ* | *ପ୍ରକାଶନବର୍ଷ* | *ମୂଲ୍ୟ* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Madhusudan Das The Legislator (His Speeches) Demy 1/8 Pp 20+523=543 | *Ed* N K Sahu P K Mishra | 1980 | Rs 500 |
| 2 | ପ୍ରଥମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ଓ ଔପନ୍ୟାସିକ ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୧୨+୯୮=୧୧୦ | ସଂ. ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣ ମହାନ୍ତି | ୧୯୮୯ | Rs 18 |
| 3 | ପ୍ରଗତି ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘ ଓ ରାଉରକେଲାର ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ବିକାଶଧରା, ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୪+୧୦୬+୬୪=୧୭୪ | ସଂ ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣ ମହାନ୍ତି | ୧୯୯୦ | Rs 20 |
| 4 | କୃଷ୍ଣଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଗଜପତି ଶତବର୍ଷର ସ୍ମରଣେ ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୬+୭୨+୨୨=୧୦୦ | ସଂ. ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣ ମହାନ୍ତି | ୧୯୯୨ | Rs 25 |
| 5 | ଶତାବ୍ଦୀର ନାୟକ : ଗୌରୀଶଙ୍କର ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୪୮+୧୫୬=୨୦୪ | ସଂ. ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣ ମହାନ୍ତି | ୧୯୯୪ | Rs 70 |
| 6 | ଗଙ୍ଗାଧର : କବିତା ଓ କବିଆତ୍ମା ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୮+୨୭୨=୨୮୦ | ଲେଖକ ଦେବେନ୍ଦ୍ର କୁମାର ଦାଶ | ୧୯୯୫ | Rs 95 |
| 7 | ଐତିହାସିକ ନବୀନ କୁମାର ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୧୨+୧୮୬=୧୯୮ | ସଂ. ଜେ.କେ ସାହୁ ଡି.ଏନ୍ ପୋପାଦାର | ୧୯୯୬ | Rs 60 |
| 8 | ଚିନ୍ତାନାୟକ ମାନସିଂହ ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ.-୧୪+୩୦୮=୩୨୨ | ଲେ. ଶ୍ରୀଚରଣ ମହାନ୍ତି | ୧୯୯୬ | Rs 100 |
| 9 | Madhusudan Das The Man & His Missions (Demy 1/8 Pp 10+262=272) | *Ed* D K Dash | 1998 (P/Back) | Rs 300 Rs 95 |
| 10 | ରଜନୀକାନ୍ତ କାବ୍ୟ ସଞ୍ଚୟନ ଡିମାଇ ୧/୮, ପୃ ୨୭୦ | ଲେ. ରଜନୀକାନ୍ତ ଦାସ | ୧୯୯୯ | Rs 125 |
| 11 | Madhusudan Das His Life & Achievements, (Demy 1/8 Pp.232) | *Ed* D K Dash | 2002 | Rs 200 |
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# APPROACHING ORIYA LITERATURE AS A NON-ORIYA INDIAN

***Prof. Amiya Dev***

I stand before you with trepidation, for I am to speak to you of your own literature–I, who only have a fragmentary knowledge of it and that too in an indirect way. Of course you do not expect me to speak to you of your literature as such, but in the context of Indian literature. I wish I could do that. But there is a problem here, a methodological problem. which is not easy to resolve. You and I are believers and tend to take Indian literature for granted; but how are we to define it ? Is it an entity, a thing given, or is it something that we arrive at, or not even arrive at, only approximate ? Or is it altogether a notion or an attitude that shapes our approach to the literatures produced in this country ? The motto upheld by the Sahitya Akademi, that Indian literature is one though written in many languages, may be sustaining enough but does not as such lead to a method. And it may tempt us to say, albeit wittily, that Indian literature is one because it is written in many languages - a statement not quite meaningless. Anyway, the old debate between the unity and the plurality of Indian literature, a probable outcome of the debate as to whether literature is language bound or language borne but not bound, seems to have taken a new turn now, to a debate between the principles of unity and difference, with a touch of the current Western post-structuralist and post-modernist orientation. The word 'unity' is no longer innocent but quite suspect smacking of power and domination. But the overemphasis on 'differences' is also perhaps a little suspect, for it may lead to an extreme cultural relativism which may not be quite salutary to a multilingual situation where historical and cultural bonds do exist in spite of differences. Besides the word 'unity' may still have a part of its innocence at one level where we are motivated by a search for structure in spite of differences, motivated not because that is our holy duty but because the recorded events are a little too compelling. However, the search for structure is not tantamount to a clamping of structure from above. At least a dialectic may maintain between the contrary perceptions of unity and difference.

This being the problematic of Indian literature, of Indian literature as an episteme, one cannot possibly refer to it as a context. On the other hand the simple Oriya/Indian equation, that is, the approach to Oriya as an Indian literature is too obvious to justify my presence here before you. All literatures produced in India are ipso facto Indian literature, but the matter cannot end there. For we do share a lot of interliterary space. What I have elsewhere called a perception of plus may not be quite irrelevant, for our perception of Oriya is not restricted to Oriya alone or of Bengali to Bengali alone. If that were the case, that is, if Oriya were Oriya alone or Bengali Bengali alone, then there would be no historical need to know each other, to see one's image in the other's mirror, no matter how partially. If indeed that were the case then the issues of the **Bauddha Gan O Doha** and **Gitagovinda** would be real bones of contention and not instances perhaps of shared origins. If indeed that were the case then the mention of Sarala Dasa's **Mahabharata** should not evoke in my mind the memory of Kasiram Das or of Balaram Dasa's Ramayana that of Krittibas. I guess I am labouring the obvious, but the facts should be all placed on the table before we plead for absolute

relativism. Of course the interliterary scene is not always simple, for whether or not through the early appearance versus late appearance of similar features in two literatures Professor Sisir Kumar Das' categories of 'pro-phane' and 'meta-phane' in his narration of nineteenth century Indian literary history – tendencies towards domination are not unknown You and I are witnesses to that, not only in terms of what happened in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the attempted suppression of your language by some of my ancestors setting on an Oriya resurgence, but also in terms of your generosity towards my literature today and my unforgivable indifference to yours I offer my presence here as a token of expiation though I know that such token are not enough What is needed is a rupture of the current mould of inequality, a programme of reception by means of which I would know more and more of your literature, if not at par with your knowledge of mine, certainly to a less scandalous extent. Only then will I be equipped to set all my inter-literary reflections on in search of Indian literature, for though it may not exist as a given it may still exist as an end

The Kerala Sahitya Akademi has approached Indian literature by generic juxtapositions of the major literatures, a method reminiscent of, though much more sophisticated than, the one employed in current surveys in the (central) Sahitya Akademi's review Indian Literature Anyone reading the two-volume Comparative Indian Literature edited by Dr K M George will have an overwhelming impression of similarities, but their actual processing will have to be done by the reader himself In other words, it is a half-way approach though as such quite fruitful Equally juxtaposing will probably be the two projected Shaitya Akademi anthologies of Indian literatue in English translation, medieval and modern, being edited by Professor Ayyappa Paniker and Dr K M George respectively The only comprehensive attempt so far to my knowledge is the Akademi's nine-volume project of the integrated history of Indian literature of which one volume, the eighth (1800-1910), is already out compiled with the help of a team of scholars and edited by Professor Sisir Kumar Das Its staple is a detailed chronology where the literary facts from twenty-two Indian literatures have been year by year integrated, and of which the text as such or the historical narrative, written by Professor Das himself, is an interpretation It is not inconceivable that a somewhat different interpretation of the same chronology is possible yielding a somewhat different narrative Thus, the integral method is not aimed at, unlike the differential one, a singular and inflexible view of Indian literature, of course, the differential method is by definition less single-minded but may be not so much because of its purpose as because of its handling of the material What is the relation between the literatures in the different Indian languages and Indian literature ? Are they its mere constituents That is, do they disappear from our perception when the latter is perceived ? Or are Indian literature and Indian literatures not mutually exclusive ? If that be so then it should be possible to think of Oriya and Indian literature simultaneously But how so ? Rabindranath Tagore once spoke of *visva* and *gramya* sahitya as two contrary categories, literature worthy and unworthy of transcension The *gramya* is that which cannot go beyond its local boundary and is so unamenable to outside reception The *visva* is its opposite If all literatures are in part both *gramya* and *visva* then there must be texts in them that are unamenable to interliterary reception and texts that are amenable Can we take our cue from Tagore and say that not every text of a literature in an

Indian language is part of Indian literature, that only some texts are, and that it is those latter texts alone that we need to consider when we speak of Indian literature? Of course this raises a problem. Who decides which text is *gramya* and which *visva*? Are there any prior tests or is it all accidental ? For one reason or another a text may get translated and fetch some outside reception. Another text which is left untranslated might have fetched a greater outside reception if it were translated. A third text may be so entrenched in its indigenous tradition that it defies translation and is thus deprived of outside reception. In other words, the canons at a given time inside a literature and its canons outside may not agree. And if that be so, then the so-called Indian literature at a given time may not be fully representative of the Indian literatures from which it is gathered. But since even accidents are part of history and are therefore open to analysis, and since what eventually matters here is not the neatness of the design but the possibility of a design itself, it should not bother us. The *gramya-visva* or the uncanonical-canonical may be determined quite obtrusively, but by problematizinq that obtrusiveness instead of being browbeaten by it we may get to the heart of history. And what matters in Indian interliterariness is history.

I have one more problem to reckon with before defining my exact task. When I say Oriya literature what do I really mean ? Is it the history of literary – sub, meta, para included– compositions in the Oriya language down the ages, from inception to date ? I may have a vague notion of that history, but is that my signification ? Or is it a number of texts naturally available to me by the interliterary process ? I know of the great Dasas, the creators of the Oriya Mahabharata, Ramayan, and Bhagavata. I know of the great riti kavi Upendra Bhanja (you have rightly christened one of your university campuses after him). I may also have read one or two snatches of his poetry in translation. I have a slightly more intimate knowledge of Radhanath Ray, Madhusudan Rao and Gangadhar Meher – but snatches again, though I may not be unable to attempt a partial derivation discourse on the first, the greatest Oriya poet this side of Upendra Bhanja. Fakirmohan I know with some confidence for I have read whatever I would lay my hands on by him in translation. I am also aware of his stature. Of post-Fakirmohan Oriya fiction I only know a few pieces, novels and stories – Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, Kalandi Charan Panigrahi, Kanhu Charan Mohanty, Sachidananda Rautray, Gopinath Mohanty, Surendra Mohanty, Manoj Das; of poetry too a few samples– Sachidanand Routray and Guruprasad Mohanty, and some more recent samples – Ramakanta Rath, Sitakant Mahapatra, Jagannath Prasad Das, Soubhagya Misra. One or two of the younger or no longer so young writers of the day are personally known to me. I was a distant witness to a minor movement in a small circle in the early seventies which was also concerned with English writing. (And I know that in the latter not Jayanta Mahapatra alone has excelled but there are others naming whom would be naming some of my friends.) I have also been present in one or two readings of Soubhagya Misra's and have gathered a feeling that he writes as competently as some of his elder contemporaries and is at par with fellow poets in other Indian languags – a poem like "Andha Mahumachi" or "Kataka Jibaku Hele" is indeed quite memorable. So on and so forth – I can add more bits of this sort. But what do they all amount to ? Certainly not to a perception of Oriya literature, capital I. In fact the issue of the ontology of a Literature is as such quite problematical. Let alone autsiders, even insiders are most of the time unaware of the whole range of a literature - what they are aware of is

a good many of texts and may be a good number of authors, that's all. And these texts and these authors are not necessarily held in a chronological order, they may even be in an apparent medley. The texts and the authors are our perception, the literature is only a conception.

Now for outsiders there is an added dimension to this issue of ontology, for the texts they perceive are in most cases translated texts. Translated texts may not be as such less than original texts, but they are certainly not identical with the latter. In other words, a certain amount of differerce is built into the very situation of outside perception. But while reading a translated text the outsider may not be throughout conscious that he is reading a translation – that is, he may at times slip into an insider's role claiming his perception to be an inside perception. The lesser such acts of usurption the better, for the two perceptions can at most approximate one another but not coalesce. The outsider should know that he is an outsider and that his perception has value as an outside perception alone. And value it has, for In interliterary situations; an inside perception is not enough. As such as I may like to know how Bankim Chandra for instance sounds to you, so may you like to know how Fakirmohan sounds to me; Tarasankar to you and Gopinath Mohanty to me. Of course, as I said earlier, you are one ahead of me in this, for you can read Bankim and Tarasankar in their original, I cannot read Fakirmohan and Gopinath Mohanty in theirs. Your perception is likely to be less outside than mine, but my perception is certainly more outside than yours. Kindly bear with me; it is with this perception that I am going to look at Fakirmohan and Gopinath Mohanty, not at Fakirmohan and Gopinath Mohanty as such but in terms of a few of their texts. My focus will be on **Chha Mana Atha Gantha** on the one hand and on **Paraja**, **Amrutara Santan** and **Danapani** on the other. My purpose is not to pass judgement on the Oriya novel as such but read some of its more celebrated specimens. And read interliterarily – that is, try to record the memory of other readings in other Indian literatures evoked by the present reading. Fakirmohan, I will try to place along Bankim and Chandu Menon, author of Indulekha. For Gopinath Mohanty I will think of Tarasankar, Pannalal Patel and Takashi Sivasankara Pillai. These are not comparisons, only instances of parallel evocations. Perhaps such interliterary reading will help us to arrive at a perception of the novel in India. And that may be our first step towards a perception of Indian literature.

## II

What strikes me most in **Chha Mana Atha Guntha** is its quality of narration which is not simple and straight. The narrated or the so-called fabula seems quite simple, the story of a rapacious creature who only knows how to grab, a wretch that drives others to madness and death and himself dies without any tears anywhere. As such it could have been a moral tale, a lecture on how evil works and cannot yet eventually pay. But the text is far from that. Of course as a transcript of early nineteenth century rural India where the land-owner and money-lender's law is supreme and where the newly established British law only casts a long shadow, it is unforgettable and probably unparalleled. And also, of course, as a roll of characters, of types and individuals -- a veritable cross-section of rural society it is fascinating. Yet it is not merely these mimeses, it is more, much more I see this additional excellence in the narration itself, in the strategies by which the so-called subject is supported. From the very beginning the text is charged with banter and innuendoes, with saws and proverbs, with

sundry allusions, some topical and some traditional with occasional compositions which only have a marginal relation to the subject at hand. And all this is meant for the reader whose primary interest is in the tale. He is a narratee by definition. He would have still been a narratee if all this were not there. But a difference is affected by their being there – from an absentee he turns as it were in to a presence. And the reading becomes an act of participation not coursing the tale alone but testing word clusters of various other imports. In other words the narratee turns into a full adult capable of appreciating intellection of a general nature along with the tale. This conferment of full adulthood on the narratee is a sure achievement, perhaps one that goes with the genre novel; but let me not hastily generalize. I will come back to it, but first let me take a look at what happens to the narrator here corresponding to the shift in the narratee.

All narratives by definition have a narrator whether or not his presence is registered. In most cases it is not – in most cases he is a matter of inference. Of course there are cases where he is himself part of the narrative, as either the protagonist persona or the persona of an associate or as that of a minor character who has access to the events. We often speak of such narrator's narration as I-narration or as perspective narration. But even within the pale of the predominant kind, the so-called osmiscient narration, there are cases where the narrator's presence is most obvious, in the form of his intermittent voice. This intermittence is sometimes called authorial intrusion, though intrusion is not very happy word. It implies a violation of the norm which is not true. What we really have is the creation of a new norm. The narrator wakes his reader narratee understand that he is not merely telling him a tale but is also holding a discourse with him. He is asking the reader to sit back and look critically at the events instead of sobbling them up. He may not be himself making a critique in the ordinary sense, but his crispness of tone and witticisms and banter are suggestive enough. **Chha Mana Atha Guntha** is a classic instance of this discourse. You open at any page and read a few lines, you will hear it. Read further and you will hear it again. And then as you read on you will realize that it is not really a matter of intermittence but built into the very fabric of the narration. The two voices, the omniscient absolute narrator's and the narrator's own in the flesh are so intertwined that they are not easy to distinguish. However, there are moments when the latter rings out and you are astounded by its rhetoric. May I, to begin with, remind you of the first two sentences of the last paragraph of the first chapter (pardon this twice-removed rough rendering from Maitri Shukla's very readable Bengali translation ? "Alas, alas, it is indeed not strange that the descendants of those villifiers who had put Christ on the cross and sent that paragon of chastity Sita to the forest, should carry on this defamation of our Ekadasi-observing benevolent Mangaraja. We are forced to be telling here what the villifiers would tell around." And a little earlier, almost at the outset of the text, "Where is the eye witness that the emptying of the milk pot was done by Mangaraja ? We are not at all ready to accept hearsay or supposition for proof. Such is also the view of lawcourt judges. Besides science says that all liquid matter evaporates away. Now milk is a liquid, are you going to discard science because this milk belonged to the landlord's household ? Also there were rats, mice, etc. in that room and whose house don't you have bedbugs, mosquetoes and flies? All the creatures of this world are going about for their belly's sake. Besides they have not listened to the pious book of God like Mangaraja.

In this state of affairs we consider it a cardinal sin to doubt Mangaraja's religious devotion." Or in chapter two, on Mangaraja's early life : "No famous man's life in this world is devid of miracles. To write all that down will need a lot of paper and pen, a lot of time. But from Mr. Mangaraja we have taken the cue that economy is a great virtue. We have thus conceived the essence of the advice that the great scholar Benjamin Franklin gave on economics. It is easy to buy paper from the market but it is very hard to use it. We will try to maintain the glory of Mangarajian economics by writing everything exactly and correctly." Or, or, or – I can go on quoting, in fact scan the whole length of the text in appreciation of the discourse held by the narrator. But let me desist for the present and instead reflect on the quality of the discourse.

In a number of places the narrator addresses his reader as "Mr. Reader", "Honourable Reader", "Honourable English-educated Reader", and so on. These words are obviously not innocent. The reader is urban and is as such a little distanced from the rural society that is depicted in the text. But by no means can he so alienated as to be totally deaf to rural life in itself. That would indeed be presumptuous and it is such presumptuousness that the narrator seems to be hitting at. He also seems to be hitting at the blind adoration that is latent in his reader towards everything English, whether mores or views or the so-called scientific outlook which often yields absurdities in the name of anthropology or history with regard to things nearer to home. There is such crisp banter in his tone that his position vis-a-vis the Oriya (or Indian) Bhadralok of the Macaulay manoeuvred genealogy is unmistakable. This is particularly pitched in his comments on the supposed power and glory of the English language in the shadow of which, he says, he is writing his Oriya text. The reader must be used to reading English, for reading Oriya he will have to make a little effort. And speaking of language Sanskrit comes up again and again and once or twice Persian which was the language of judiciary before English. The narrator reminds his reader that Sanskrit is now in a bad way because the English call it a dead language. Yet his discourse is quite lined with Sanskrit quotations, not from Manu and Canakya and other social-moral philosophers alone but from Kalidasa as well. But quite obviously these quotations have an intertextual function. When in police custody the protagonist is approached by a lawyer whose only interest is fleecing him but who has to do it under the cover of fellow feeling and benevolence, the narrator plays with the second line of the Canakya sloka, "rajadvare smasane caaya tisthati sa vandhavah" – plays with because his purpose is not hermeneutics but travesty. Similarly when describing the supposed beauty of the surrogate heroine of the text, the maid Champa, without whom the **chha mana atha guntha affair** would not have matured, describing no less in the manner of the novel than in that of kavya, the narrator is reminded of Kalidasa's classic words from *the Raghuvamsa* opening, "athava krtavadvare vamsehsmin purvasuribhih/manau vijrasamutkrne sutrasyavasti me gatih – classic also as an archetypal prologue to literary intertextuality. Are the Sanskrit intertexts designed for the purpose of persuading the Bhadralok reader as to the power and glory of their language against those of English which too provides, though mostly as Biblical quotations, some intertexts ? Sanskrit learning was still possibly a part of education but it was fast losing to English. The narrator bemoans the fact that Persian had already lost to English.

Of course what gives the discourse its motive force in this regard is its crusade for Oriya. Not only does it persuade that Oriya must be used for all purposes, even for reporting

an Englishman's English deposition at the Cuttack Sessions Court, but it also employs, a good many Oriya proverbs as intertexts – probably its more frequent intertexts I am no judge of the raciness added by them, though I surmise that a lot would be. The 'post modernists' of today may even fall back upon them as an antidote to yesterday's modernism, but that is beside the point. As addressed to the Bhadralok reader whose taste is fairly fine they may be a bit scandalous, but it is that scandal that the discourse is probably aimed at. A rupture must be produced. The Bhadralok reader must be jolted back to his true reality. Though not overtly so, the discourse is at the same quite patriotic, at one place to speak of the joy caused by something a reference is made to the joy that must have been caused to the East India Company's board of directors by the news of Clive's victory at Plassey. Or a little later, when it is told how the protagonist Mangaraja was on his way to attaining his estate from the Muslim landlord by advancing him a loan, we read : "The historian says that Clive's acquisition of Bengal's governorship from the Emperor of Delhi took so little time that even the transaction of an ass from a seller to a buyer would take more." And speaking of the value of the chha mana atha guntha land that has caused so much trouble, the narrator refers to Kohinoor : "It is said that he who possesses the famous gem Kohinoor has his very line extinct. Alauddin to Ranjit Singh are its proof; but ever since that gem has become the head jewel of our respected, most honourable, manifestly Lakshmi-in-the flesh England-residing Empress of India, England's glory has spread over the whole world." Not only is the Bhadralok reader thus indirectly persuaded to have concern for his country's plight but realize the ridiculousness of his own sense of inferiority, as in the following : "There is much regard for science in this century, the nineteenth. For science is at the root of all progress. Look how fair-complexioned the English are and how dark the Oriyas. The reason for it is that the English have studied science, the Oriyas have not."

The discourse reaches a height in the Champa chapter. As I said, the narrator problematizes the poetic act of describing the 'beauty' of the surrogate heroine. He quotes the supposed literary convention, "The authors are bound by rule to describe the beauty and virtues of the book's hero-heroine. So we cannot violate the perennial convention." "But authors too", he says, "have a fault. Once they get a heroine, they look as if they have got heaven in their hands and forgetting all else they straightaway set about describing her beauty. It is not that we are not capable of describing beauty. Look there are trees, leaves, forests and flowers like mango, jack fruit, pomegranate and melon; by equating champa's limbs with them, particular to particular, the description of the beauty can be attained. But these days such ancient description will not do. For English-knowing readers Enlish-fashioned descriptions are needed. The classical Indian poets would call the beautiful woman 'elephant-gaited', the English would say how silly ! It cannot be that, only the woman that can trot in the horse's 'gallop' is absolutely beautiful. We fear that as a result of the manner in which English culture is forcing its way into this country like the flood water rolling down Mahanadi on the first day of Ashadh, our newly civilized educated Babus would probably propose arrangements for whips and saddles for their own darling ladies... There is a new import in this country along with English goods called taste. If you do not keep your eye on that you are undone. You will be taken as uneducated and uncultured. We have got this lesson on witnessing Upendra Bhanja's misfortune the other day (the reference, we know, is to the

Indradhanu-Bijuli controversy)... "This is of course part of the contemporary critique of the English-educated Indian Babu or Bhadralok. Nineteenth century Bengali writing, for instance, is full of it sketches, broadsides, lampoons, fictions – varieties of discourse in the newly framed literary prose (and often to fill up the pages of the newly established periodicals) some landmarks of which are **Babur Upakhyan** (A Babu's account, 1821), **Kalikata Kamalalay** (Calcutta, abode of wealth, 1823), **Naba Babu Bilas** (Pleasures of a newly made Babu, 1825), **Alaler Gharer Dulal** (The spoilt child, 1858), Ekei ki Bale Sabhyata (Is this called culture, 1854) **Hutom Pyachar Naksa** (Sketches by the big owl, 1862) and a good many of Bankim's essays including 'Babu' where in the manner of **Mahābhārata** narration Vaisampayāna describes to King Janamejaya this new humdn species : "... O King listen again. He whose word is one in thought, ten in speech, hundred in script and thousand in quarrels is Babu. Whose intelligence is confined to books in boyhood, bottles in manhood, to wife's hem in old age is Babu. Whose personal duty is to the Englishman, preceptor a Brahmoism expert, Veda (scripture) the national newspapers and holy place the 'National Theatre' is Babu. Who is a Christian to the missionary, a Brahmo to Kesabchandra, a Hindu to his father and an atheist to a brahmin beggar is Babu. Who takes water in his own house, wine in friends', abuses in prostitutes' and get-outs in the sahib master's is Babu. Whose distate is for oil during batch, for his own fingers during meals, and for the mother tongue during conversation is Babu. Whose care is for clothes alone, alertness for flattery alone, devotion for wife or mistress alone, and anger for good books alone is doubtless Babu. ... O King, those of whom I spoke, would live to believe that by chewing betel, hugging pillows, speaking bilingually and smoking tobacco they would rescue India." But while in most of these texts the critique is quite frontal, in our discourse it is not. In our discourse the critique is quite indirect, may be beceuse it is designed as a dialogue with the Bhadralok Babu himself. But by being indirect it is not ineffective. In fact in place it seems to achieve more effect than it would have achieved if it were direct. Its seeming mildness pays. Also its narrational situs is worth remembering – how can it assume an absolute role when it is part of the narrator's 'omniscience' ?

It is obvious that this discourse should also have a straight literary scope. As writer the narrator may like to tell his reader what fiction writing means and what he, the reader, is to expect from him. That is, he may try to strike up a rapport with the reader. Taken simplistically such rapport seeking may result from a need of orientation that the writer feels the reader should have, in order to appreciate the fiction he is being offered. One of the classic examples of such rappport seeking is found in **Indulekha** (1889) which is said to be the first full-fledged Malayalam novel. "It is seldom", says its narrator, "that an author who has set himself to the task of composing a story rigidly in accordance with veracity and decorum has occasion to apprehend that any passages in his work will cause heart-burning or give offence. But since this style of composition is a novelty in Malabar, some of my readers may possibly misunderstand the object and design of certain episodes in the book, and I therefore deem it expedient to write a few words by way of explanation." (trans. W. Dumergue, Matribhumi edn., p. 94). There is no touch of irony in this statement or in statements like : "When I realized the necessity for writing this chapter, the greatest diffidence was engendered in my mind by the consciousness that I was wholly unequal to the task of

portraying the beauties of my heroine, but I see no means of escape, I must do my best." (p 7) Or "My readers have in all probability already inferred that the hearts of this gentle pair could not possibly avoid being mutually filled with tender and passionate love, but instead of leaving the matter to inference alone, I think it well to describe here, briefly but clearly, the beginning and progress of Madhavan's courtship, and I therefore venture on a slight digression from my story." (p 13). There are more such straight "apologies", "explanations" and "exhortations" in **Indulekha**, all without irony which fits well with the circumstances under which the author said he had come to write the novel in Malayalam. It was to fulfill the curiosity of his wife and friends who had no access to English, novels that he, after recounting the stories of whatever English fiction he would read to them, finally decided to write something similar to which they would have access It goes without saying that the rapport seeking as part of the narrator's discourse in **Chha Mana Atha Guntha** is far more complex and loaded with irony Even a statament like the following quoted out of context may not deceive us "Reader, Sir, you understand ? We are authors, hence omniscient " However, most statements are less obviously simple as the following quotations show (a) "We wanted to write one thing and have written another While rowing boats get pulled away from their destination by the water's currents But the tough oarsman does not give up the helm True our pen is going this way and that way, but the basic theme will not go wide of its mark—it will take its course " (b) "You will easily understand [this] if we give brief English translations-- in the temple four village activities are performed, [it is] the Church (the place of worship), the public library (the general bookstore), the restaurant (the dining hall), the town hall (the Bhagavat house)." (c) "O honourable Reader, our knowledge is paltry, so we are quite unable to recognize weavers Kindly help us recognise them " (d) "When you are told the basic principle of understanding by surmise you will find your way When you will hear that one is a young princess, you will have to realize that she is very beautiful and has many virtues " (e) "We too are by nature opposed to writing excessively, yet these words are about the hero and the heroine of whatever you call it, true tale, fantasy, novel, fable, you cannot leave them out " (f) "Caution, English-educated Readers don't laugh on hearing this history from our Ekadusichandra, if you do, then fifty percent of Marshman and Tod's writing will thin away "

Reading these instances of rapport seeking on the narrator's part with the narratee where the rapport is by no means straight and untortuous one may be reminded of Bankim's fiction There too the narrator at times call upon the reader not asking for a simple response as in **Indulekha** by way of orientation. Bankim's reader is quite experienced and it is to his experience that the narrator seems to be appealing But the text of that appeal is pretty uniform which is not the case with that in **Chha Mana Atha Guntha** where the reader is invested with an unusual variety This reader is sometimes experienced, and sometimes not, but most often he has pretences to experience Bankim's fiction reader, unlike the reader of his non-fictional prose is a Bhadralok of a fair amount of taste A statement like the following goes well with him "Reader, Sir, have you ever seen 'beauty's glow' ? If not seen it, you may have heard of it Many beautiful women 'light up all sides' with their beauty It is said that many daughter-in-laws 'light up the house'. At holy Braja and during the Nisumbha battle it was a dark beauty that made everything glow Mr Reader really understood what

is meant by 'beauty's glow' ? Bimala lit everything with beauty, but was like an oil lamp's glow; a bit low, needs oil, else won't blaze, good for a household, live with it, get it cook rice, make beds, fire, but touch it and you will burn up. Tilottama too lit everything with beauty– that was like the glow of a crescent moon, clear, charming, cool, but not meant for a household, not that strong and shines from afar. Ayesha also lit everything with beauty, but that was like moring sunshine, bright, glowing, yet turns whatever it falls on to smiles.

As the lotus in a garden so is Ayesha in this narrative, hence I want her form attainable to Mr Reader's contemplation." Mark the sophistication expected. And this is more or less the tenor of the narrator's words directly addressed to the reader within the framework of omniscient narration in Bankim. In one instance we will be reminded of the Champa chapter, minus perhaps a part of its manifold complexity. "No doubt Mr Reader has curiosity to find out how beautiful Diggaj Gajapati's enchantress Asmani is. Well, I will fulfil his desire. But it will be a matter of great defiance if a novice like me goes out of the way in which authors describe women's beauty. Hence I should utter the auspicious words first O goddess of learning; o lotus-seated one ! O lady of the autumn-moon-like face ! Lady full of affection for devotees at your white lotus-petal-surpassing feet ! Cast upon me the shadow of those feet. I will describe Asmani's beauty. O creator of large, juicy and long compounds! Give me a place on a side of your toe-nail. I am to describe beauty... Mother ! you have two forms, do not trouble me by riding my shoulder in the form in which you brought boons to Kālidāsa and in the influence of whose spirit **Raghuvamsā, Kumārsambhava, Meghaduta, Sakuntalā** were born, by meditating whose spirit Vālmiki composed the **Rāmāyana** Bhavabhūti the **Uttaracarita**, Bhāravi the **Kirātārjunīya;** do descend on my shoulder in the form by contemplating which Srīharsa wrote **Naisadha**, by the grace of whose spirit Bharatchandra described the incomparable beauty of Vidya and enchanted Bengal, by whose grace Dasarathi Roy took birth, the form in which you are still lighting up Battala; I will describe Asmani's beauty." Interestingly a whole chapter, short no doubt, of **Bishabriksha** is titled "Cause for Mr Reader's Anger" beginning in the following way : "Here Mr Reader will be much irritated. It is customary for narratives that marriage comes at the end, we have set about Kundanandini's marriage in advance. Besides there is the perennial custom that he with whom the heroine is married must be very handsome, endowed all virtues, and be a heroic person and must be overflowing in love with the heroine. Poor Taracharan surely did not have any of this – for handsomeness he had a copper complexion and a snub nose – his heroism was only expressed to his school's pupils and on the issue of love I can't say how fondly he was disposed to Kundanandini but he had a bit of affection for a monkey." Such sericomic patches, a part from the other things make it obvious that Bankim's is the closest comprison to the narrator's discourse in **Chha Mana Atha Guntha.** But in certain respects the latter is more complex and carries a wider range of signification with regard to the Bhadralok's place in nineteenth century Indian society.

But is this narrator, like Bankim's to an extent, absolutely and uflinchingly sure of the value of whatever he is saying and can thus claim a privilege over the narratee he is addressing ? Or is he at times quite tentative, quite explanatory ? Is his discourse a discourse from above or a discourse on a level ? In other words,is he or is he not at times aware that he too is a Bhadralok like his narratee and subject to a number of foibles ? Of course it will

be absurd to suggest this to be an echo of the mid-nineteenth-century French poet's perception about his reader. "Hypocrite lecteur– mon semblable–mon frere." Still a certain degree of fraternity may be argued without which the narrator might turn out to be an absolute moralist. But I would not like to take Fakirmohan for a moralist, if for nothing else, for his fascinating autobiography where he views himself quite unheroically, without any self-righteousness. If there is any righteousness there it is for the Oriya cause. That narration, the **Atmajibanacharita**, is addressed to fellow Oriyas, more or less of a similar background. Bhadraloks who have urban moorings but are not totally alienated from rural life, who still have Sanskrit, may be even a little Persian, and most of them some Bengali and who have opened up to English but who hold Oriya above all. Not that there are no tensions in the relative valuation of the languages, there are and part of this narrative is an honest account of one such tension but without any bitterness. Fakirmohan's sense of history is so strong that he situates both himself and his readers in history. No moralist, no idealist either –his discourse arises out of that sense of history. **Indulekha** presupposes an agenda : English education, particularly female English education for a liberalization of the tradition-bound psyche. While its liberal hero gets exposed to the three prime centres of liberalism in the country. Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, the liberal heroine sustains all onslaught of tradition by means of her superior intellectual attainments. In that respect **Indulekha** is a simple romance without much realism which only obtains in its depiction of tradition. And it is only in this latter that the text has a touch of irony, in its more important part none. Bankim too has an agenda, though a much more complex on, but he has also a lot of irony which adds a third dimension to his fiction. I don't think **Chha Mana Atha Guntha** has any agenda except breathing history and it is because of history that its narrator's discourse, the discourse embedded in its omniscient narration, is so complex, so varied and so comprehensive. To my knowledge, which however is very limited, I don't find an exact parallel to this discourse.

This emphasis on discourse is not to undermine mimesis. But I think in the early Indian novel a special function is assigned to discourse, for it is through discourse that its reader is identified and, if needed, moulded. This reader is not the simple auditor of the tale where the only job is to be charmed. He is much more. He will be charmed and yet not charmed. That is, his delectation will in part be a conscious act. He will know that he is dealing with a mimesis with which he may agree or may not. It is the business of the novelist to bring his reader over to his side. As long as he speaks from above, that is takes his reader for granted, he will put him to sleep and not awaken him to truth. The novel is fiction only by definition, but its main purpose is truth. And that purpose will be defeated if the reader does not recognize its contents. Thus the mimesis needs breaks which are filled up by discourse. The earlier Indian novel is in particular need of these breaks and thus of this discourse, for it is a new genre and is as such quite self-conscious. My reading of whatever history of the novel in one or two Indian languages I am familiar with, is that gradually this discourse will minimise and that the mimesis itself will turn into some kind of a composite discourse. If I shift now from Fakirmohan to Gopinath Mohanty it is primarily to identify that composite discourse in the Oriya novel. However, this does not mean that the mimesis as such in **Chha Mana Atha Guntha** is meagre. On the contrary it is exemplary and contains the seed of much of the realism of the later novel. If realism is an unsentimental

depiction of life's crassness, if realism is an unameliorated presentation of experience, if realism is fighting back all illusions, and if realism is as objective and adjectiveless a description of life processes as possible, then this text is indeed a classic of realism. There is a starkness about it – and this is also true of the story "Rebati" with which Fakirmohan began his final literary career – which is not very common. One may be reminded of the quality of Premchand's or Manik Bandyopadhyay's realism which in a way is the height of realism in the Indian novel.

From Fakirmohan straight to Gopinath Mohanty is bad historiography but perhaps not bad reception. Of course I have little choice. So bound am I by limitations that I cannot help hailing reception as my forte. But even good historiographers may agree that this is good reception, for Gopinath Mohanty is usually acclaimed as the greatest Oriya fiction writer this side of Fakirmohan. Besides historiography and reception may not be at loggerheads but in part mutually exclusive. That is, the historiographer's order and the recipient's order – if he has any order at all– may be two different orders equally valid. However, there cannot be any absolute fixity in the second order, for reception may vary from age to age changing canon which is itself an act of history. Moreover, it may vary in the same age depending on the variety of differentials existing in society, class, gender and so on. This too is an act of history. And when we add interliterariness to it, the reception across linguistic borders, we get a third dimension of variance, not unrelated to history. There is a historiography that will take cognizance not only of reception as such but of all these dimensions of reception. It will not merely write down the chronological order and interpret it, but it will also try to write down the order of reception or rather, the orders of receptions thus sacrificing neatness and structure but presenting a more comprehensive transcript of literary facts. One may try to represent this complexity by means of what is now known as polysystem in which a number of systems simultaneously operate and also cohere. However, my present task is simpler, to insist on interliterary reception as such, not as a historiographic component. I spoke of Fakirmohan as an interliterary recipient, I am going to speak of Gopinath Mohanty too as interliterary recipient, not as a historiographer.

Gopinath Mohanty has written so much and so little of it is known to me, and that too so indirectly, that it may be better not to speak of Gopinath Mohanty as such but of the few texts only that are available to me – three novels and a few stories. The novels are **Paraja, Amrutara Santan** and **Danapani** – **Paraja** in Bikram Dasa's condensed English version endorsed by the author, **Amrutara Santan** in Sudhakar Roy Choiudhury and Jyotirindramohan Joardar's Bengali and **Danapani** in Saila Sarma's Bengali. I am going to speak mainly of them. The stories I will only refer to once or twice, most of which I have read in Sitakant Mahapatra's very readable English translation, one in Jyotirindramohan Joardar's Bengali and one in both Bengali and English, the Bengali being Sourin Bhattacharya's included in Manabendra Bandyopadhyay edited anthology of mdoern Indian stories, **Adhunik Bharatiya Galpa,** Vol. I. This last story, "Ants" narrating you remember – a young law-upholding excise officer's trek to a tribal market in the southern hills in search of petty rice smugglers and his eventual perception of what hunger means to humanity everywhere living at the subsistence level and yet of how life persists through death and regeneration, is in a way central to the texts I am dealing with its concluding passage containing a central

realization May I quote those words in Sitakant Mahapatra's rendering? "Ramesh kept standing Before his consciousness there was no more any history Time had ended There was no Kapilendradev, no Purushottam, no Konark There was no special distinctive image of the men who form the backbone of a country or a nation History was devoid of sense, meaning There was nothing but ants, ants, everywhere, hugry ants carrying mouthfuls of food to live, to survive and the stream of ants converging on ant-heaps for a new lease of precarious life The ant wanted to live Ramesh felt a cold shudder The brief sunshine of late winter had faded All around a thin layer of blue haze was spreading It was evening He felt the cold of Magh month inside." To be an Oriya is to be aware of the past, but to be an Oriya is also to be aware of the present, and it is this present that takes shape here, but in its starkest form, as part of the life process itself as well as of the history which is in motion And the discourse here arises out of the very mimesis As readers we are not asked to pay a special heed to it, our heed to the mimesis brings us to it. In fact it does not as such matter, it matters only as a part of the mimesis We have moved away from **Chha Mana Atha Guntha.**

Of course the title 'Danapani' is discourse-potent and the number of brief texts built around it at regular intervals in the novel do add up to a discourse. But by no means is it independent of the 'danapani' maddened men scrambling for success in an industrial-commercial company's multi-layered hieraichy In fact it is voiced at moments of perception either by the omniscient narrator himself arising, as it were, out of the very depths of the protagonists' psyche or by one or two personae capable of an intense self and social understanding and assuming a kind of choric function The oft-quoted words by Banabihari Pattanayak, the famous Banu of un-contaminated morals, are a signal instance of the latter "Alas! all this is a scramble for bread and water, my boy, a scramble for bread and water, all for only a morsel of rice in the cracked begging bowl–" No less significant are the words like the following in the narrator's own voice "People gather here and steal bread and water, they also provide bread and water to some. And quietly the price goes up and down When it goes up one swallows up another's store in an Agastya-like draught In homes are arranged as before the rice bowl, the glassful of water, the seating mat – yet three-fourths of all that are blotted out by the price magic With wide-eyed wonder the householder looks on and sees – yes, the bowl is there but there is no rice in it; he does not know who took it and how took it " Obviously a ruthlessness is perceived here, a ruthlessness expressed through these and other words, a ruthlessness which is the ultimate subject of the narration The covetted success does come to our hero, a little man who has mastered the art of fawning and slaving, come in stages taking him to the very top but without giving him any happiness at all Even his vanity is not fully flattered, for his wife does not care for him any more and his home is all barren now. In the course of her growth, itself concomitant to his scramble up the ladder and partly a determinant for it, she attains a class shift to which he does not quite fit The little man still remains little by her side The reality or the ruthlessness of success in the world's scramble is made home to him – all – all he can do now is to stay buried in absolute officialdom It is almost droll or grotesque, this finale, without any sense of tragedy or even a hint of pathos The image of the ant has a special point here, an ant among many ants, trying to scrape out both a present and a future The individual's story is thus historicized,

through these images and metaphors that form part of the very language in which the narrative is told and through these reflective pluggings of narrative interstices. What I have so far called discourse in this lecture (which is itself a discourse), the narrator's strategies for communicating with the narratee – not as anything given or as anything absolutely prior to the act of narration – that discourse is here, in **Danapani**, integrated with the mimesis. Or one way put it the other way round, the mimesis is integrated here with the discourse. And we will be fully justified to call it the mimetic discourse without emphasizing a prior grammar.

If you ask 'when' and 'where' about **Danapani's** events, you may not have a direct answer except of course that the time is broadly 'now" and the place broadly 'here'. But an indirect sense of history is surely communicated. Speaking at one point of the necessity of the guardian of society, chiefs of companies in the present instance, the text unrolls : "The white-skinned Englishmen carried out this task in country after country bearing on their back 'the white man's burden'. Poet Kipling has acclaimed the greatness of that sacrifice. The civilized nations too have realised that greatness and accorded honour. By bearing the white man's burden the English had brought electric lights to dark forests and had cut down the jungle and erected newly laundered houses with a high level of culture in them; and this white culture had again and again pushed awake the sleeping, lazy and conservative world, and everyone then got up and set off the dance of the age, Siva's Tandava. The nobleness of this new creed has been established by the upper-caste, the genteel and the proud class of each province, the state's feudal order." That the legacy of authority in former colonies has passed on to a certain class is quite obviously suggested here. It is they who are obviously doing what the English were formerly doing, hold the key to 'civilization' by means of industry and development. It is they who are, therefore, the absolute arbiters of everybody's bread and water, of who to get what quality of bread and what clarity of water. This shift tallies with the succession of chiefs in the company in which our hero has been working. The first chief, the drunken sot of a white sahib, is a direct hangover from the colonial days. And the 'Sahib' through whom our hero attains his ultimate glory is an Indian of the new breed, urbane and outgoing, management incarnate but perfectly rooted in the gentry. The one in between, the gruff individualist who only knows how to make others work and to work himself, authority and competence incarnate, is also of the gentry though not of the new breed. Inspite of the individualist emphasis in the text, the delineation of the individual's desires and fears, machinations for 'success' in the scramble for bread and water, **Danapani** is a depiction of history, the history that makes individuals and that individuals make. That the hero's wife, of rural antecedents and a bundle of rooted values, should turn into a society lady capable of extra-marital relationship and of luxurious **Schmerz** is sure history in this sense. There is no end to the scramble and none to its attendant decay.

If **Danapani** is a tale of ants inside the body of an industrial-commercial company in an urban-suburan setting, then **Paraja** and **Amrutara Santan** are tales of ants, of whole tribes of them, in the hills and forests making subsistence out of the soil. **Danapani** keeps company with a lot of fiction that came to be written in the other Indian languages for instances in Malayalam and Bengali, with the advent of social analysis. Its materialism is particularly familiar to us, readers who grew up in the forties in abject economic conditions.

That life is first a struggle for material existence, a scramble for food, clothes and shelter is the donne in a number of texts that flit across my mind. That all the other things of life, the so-called higher things, be they love or peace or happiness or idealism or that divine discontent which motivates man along, experience after experience – all have a material base is indisputable once the primacy of materialism is accepted. Thus the new fiction is not an account of unaccountable events – it is grounded in accountable matter. And that accountability is often available in terms of the immediate social history where a lot of inequality not only persists but generates a lot of oppression. Even a text like **Chemmeen,** Takazhi Sivasankara Pillai's formerday classic, is no less a lay-out of the graded material existence of Kerala's coastal fishing communities with all their social inequalities of big boat and small boat and boatlessness or netlessness, of free labour and bonded labour, than of their faith-propelled relation with the sea which has an unchanging quality about it - almost an anthropological specimen – or of the fatal drama of two young person's love in the context of inequalities and faith. In a similar way Manik Bandyopadhyay's **Padmanadir Majhi** (The boatman of Padma) and **Putulnacher Itikatha** (The puppets' tale) are tales of graded material existence without blotting out the faith and the superstitions that hold things together at another level. But neither Takazhi nor Manik Bandyopadhyay would give precedence to emotional-spiritual life over material life whether or not work out the exact geometry of the one's dependence on the other. Manik Bandyopadhyay has a short novel called **Chashir Meye Kulir Bau** (Peasant's daughter labourer's wife) where the pattern seems simpler depicting the migration of labour from agriculture to industry, but there too the things are not absolutely geometrical. Thus the mimetic discourse of **Danapani** is primarily a materialist discourse. Any hints of an idealist discourse that may be located in it are secondary.

The mimetic discourse of **Paraja** and **Amrutara Santan** too is primarily materialistic though of a much greater import. To begin with it is a discourse of marginalization by necessity where a materialist view of tribal history is signified. If to live in the hills and forests– were to live in the hills and forests alone, in the lap of mother earth, then it might have rung out differently, but to live in the hills and forests is also to live in touch with forest guards and revenue officers, excise inspectors, and above all money-lenders, the uniquitous sahukars whose only aim is to grab. Neither **Paraja** nor **Amrutara Santan** is anthropology. The depiction of tribal life is meticulous, from habitat to everyday rituals to festivals to customs and beliefs, but what predominates is labour, the struggle for existence and what runs underneath is flux, a sense of change and loss. In **Paraja** this is realized rather dramatically, the text being punctuated by non-tribal onslaughts – the forest guard nodding his olympian head at the tribal patriarch's prayer to clear a portion of the hills for cultivation, to his casting a lustful eye on the pariarch's elder daughter and being rebuffed, to his revenge through revenue officers' clamping a fine on the tribal for unauthorized felling of trees, to the latter's walking into the sahukar's snare to raise the fine money and his and his younger son's turning into the sahukar's 'gotis' or slaves; to the elder son being caught by excise officials for brewing illicit liquor and his too turning into the sahukar's 'goti's to the two daughters leaving home to join road building for earning a wage; to the patriarch's pawning away his only piece of fertile land to the sahukar for his own freedom so that he can come home, bring his daughters back and till a new piece of land in the hills; to the sahukar's

luring away the elder daughter as his mistress by material bribes; to their filling a suit against him for grabbing that fertile piece of land and losing the case; to their desperate scramble to the sahukar for mercy and their sudden hewing him down out of fury. This melodramatic ending is only apparently melodramatic, for among other things it symbolizes the tribal-non-tribal alienation. When the sahukar snapped out to those cowed figures before their axes went up: "I've taken the land, I've taken one sister; and I shall take the other one too. I shall take your wives; I shall drive you from court to court through the length of the country. I shall make you sweat out your lives as gotis, and I shall rub your noses in the dust"– when he blurted out these filthy words he was not speaking a Ramachandra Bisoi alone (reminiscent in any way of Fakirmohan's Ramachandra Mangaraja), son of Sahukar Janardan Bisoi of the brewer caste, but as all money-lenders whose only rationale of existence is to fatten themselves out of others' possessions. And thus the tribals here are not just tribals, Parajas or Dombs or Kondhs, but common humanity being dispossessed of its last possessions. The axes that suddenly go up are in all probability an instance of reflex.

The discourse bears it out that the sahukar has cast himself out in the image of the 'Ribini' or Revenue Inspector,Garaja Sundara by name, signifying thereby that bullying and oppression are part of the system. The tribal males are all to him either potential or actual 'gotis'. By emphasizing this institution the discourse indicates the mechanics of bonded slavery. Money is what the tribal world cannot quite do without in spite of its native freedom from money, and money is what the tribal world does not possess. The only way of raising that money is by mortgaging labour. And that mortgage can never be lifted unless a greater mortgage is offered, the covetted tribal land. Thus the discourse is that of a history in which the money-lender is likely to eat up everything, land and life – males to slave for him and females to warm his bed. There is of course an alternative to all this, wage-earning, either in distant Assam tea estates or in the local road building that is changing the face of the hills and the forests or some such engagements. But that deracination is the last thing that the tribal patriarch would accept. In the Bengali **Hansuli Banker Upakatha** (Tale of a sickle-shaped bend), Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay too deals with this question may be a little more pointedly. His tribal 'kahars', not aboriginal tribals but tribals that have settled down on village fringes and provide low caste services to village upper castes are confronted with this question in a big way. Should they stay on and suffer poverty and humiliation or move over to construction sites in the emerging township by the railway line and earn wages ? This also takes shape as a conflict of generations. The elderly chief whose values are all entrenched in the tribal way of life and his young son – surrogate, the rebel, though no less concerned with tribal destiny which is on the verge of a change. The older man's interest is in the land and the jungle and the little river that takes a sickle-shaped bend near the village, the younger man's interest is in the outside world, the railway line and its growing neighbourhood. His spirit of adventure is pitted against the older man's sense of commitment. Such conflict and such a hint of change is not uncommon to Tarasankar's fiction in general. He is often called a regional novelist, but what he deals with in portraying his region is not its uniqueness but its truth to history like all other regions. What he deals with the decay and disintegration on the one hand and the accumulation of riches and power on the other, the shift of classes. His **Ganadevata** is often considered a masterpiece of this realistic discourse, and though it

is conceived quite differently from **Paraja** it shares a by and large similar history of how the money-lender gradually grabs up everything. Of course the money-lender in **Paraja** is an extremist mimesis, but this extremism is only an exaggeration of the type.

It should be obvious from **Paraja's** discourse that there is nothing in tribal life that can escape history, even such an individualist matter as young love. That the patriarch's elder daughter's young man should run away with the patriarch's elder son's beloved may seem innocuous but is not quite so. At one level the camera focusses on these two persons, the elder daughter and the elder son, through whom the historical process seems to take shape. It all really begins with the elder daughter being propositioned by the outside world which is what eventually comes to be accepted after the frustration of the love inside the tribe and a la tribe, after her one escapade during wage-earning in the road building site. And it is in front of her in her paramour master's love nest that the elder son's axe suddenly flashes up that misty morning in the hills which closes the text. The elder son is the brooding type as opposed to the younger son who is rather carefree. And it is he who feels – and that feeling is pulsed in the discourse – the most the humiliation of not only the 'goti-hood but of the sister being stolen by the money-lender, though that perhaps was not quite the case for she found the lure a little filling for her emotional vacuum. Again there is a contrast between her and her younger sister who seems to be more attuned to a tribal girl's 'destiny'. That stranger from another village going about offering his bonded service in exchange of his marriage to a girl in the house should end up before the younger daughter is of course an accident but an accident that accords with the overall meaning. The elder daughter is not to be married nor is the elder son. If the others of his age group, those with whom in the early part he spends his nights at the bachelor's dormitory courting their girls with music, are adjusted to everything the elder son is not. History is as it were manifest through him. Similarly history is manifest through the elder daughter who too is a misfit of a kind. It is a structural feat that the elder son's sudden axe hews down the elder daughter's paramour master. Between the two of them they give shape to the catastrophe attested by history.

If history is approached dramatically in **Paraja,** in terms of a quick succession of events, then in **Amrutara Santan** it is approached epically with events yielding to a larger flow. Of course the title itself is suggestive of a discourse deriving from the contained intertext. However, we rarely read a text in the light of its title, our perception of which is often an afterthought. In fact it may as such be an invitation to reread a text. And if we do that here the first thing we notice is the juxtaposition of a death and birth, the death of the eighty-year old village headmen and the birth of his grandson – both events taking place in the open ("Dartani under, Darmu above – Sarabu Saonta died on the greatest feast day of the Kondh calender." "She doesn't remember her past any longer. She knows she has got an answer to all her past quests, she now is mother to a human son, she is Dartani, Darmu is in her lap.") – and the highlighting of the tribal belief that the grandfather's soul has come back in the body of the grandson. But this sense of structure, so characteristic of tribal society and suggestive of anthropological discourse, does not withhold a sense of gradual disintegration, not realized, as in **Paraja**, through a clash with the outer world but from within. It is primarily signified, we cannot fall to notice, by the restlessness of the dead headman's soul, the new headman, and alienation of his uncle, the dead headman's younger

brother, and the loneliness and the misery of the dead headman's daughter-in-law, the mother of his grandson who proved heroic at the outset by delivering him in the open by herself. The young headman's restlessness, as opposed to another young headman's stability from another village, takes the obvious form of a sexual escapde in which the partner turns out to be ayoung woman raised in the plains but come back to the tribal fold out of destitution. As we further and further re-read into the text we take cognizance of the value shift and the value confusion manifest through this young woman who bears the history of exit and return. She is and will perhaps remain part 'other' to a tribal youngman, a dhangdi and yet not quite a dhangdi, may be that is what pulls our hero, gone wayward with the passage of the patriarchal shadow, to her. A hint of a probable change through a perception of the 'other' is also suggested in the case of the other young headman who dreams of the modernity of a bullock cart to rationalise his paddy supplies to the outer world. And in keeping with his businesslike composure he deals much better with the greedy sahukar who comes to grab than his young friend our hero. While most tribal youths are primarily concerned with love and marriage, and the young man with whom our dead headman's daughter finally runs away is in this sense typical, he is not. ("He has so many of such adventures in mind. Being engaged in work and thinking only of work's various aspects his days are spent. The thought of marriage does not greatly overpower his mind. He can marry any day later. He wants to fly very high, he is Harguna the vulture.") It does not take him much, in spite of his vulnerable youth, to see through the sexual designs of that girl who grew up in the plains. He has a relatively steady discourse even though from time to time he is swayed by the tribal youth's customary propensities. But by and large he holds a contrast on the one hand with the perfect and uncontaminated tribal youth, the rival who snatches away the girl meant for him by the elders and on the other with our wayward hero whose success with the plains-grown girl signifies a broken home for his wife and son who set out in search of a new life. This latter youth's is the most unsteady discourse.

The patriarch too, prior to his death at the outset, has a discourse, one containing a perception of tribal history full of despair. The Kondha, he reflects, have been very unfortunate, ever more and more unfortunate. They lost their land in the plains and pushed uphill. But in the hills too all land is somebody else's, not their own. Now they only bear somebody else's burden, somebody else's yoke. "It hurts physically, it hurts mentally. The Kondha have lost their kingdom, their country is split into bits, may be one day people will forget that there ever lived any Kondha." At the same time he realizes that the Kondha have been in part themselves responsible for their disintegration. It was the Kondha custom of human sacrifice for divine propitiation that had killed so many from its own fold: "Thus through self-deception they have killed so many innocent people in the name of Darmu, of Dartan... Today the headman's time is up. Sacrifices are all over today, and their is Darmu and there is Dartani, but no improvement has taken place to the Kondha." It is at this moment of despair that the patriarch dies, though he dies knowing that he himself has lived a pure life and will surely return ("Anyway, he will again take birth. He has still a taste for mandia, for meat, he can still get drunk. and these forests are beautiful, these Olsi-covered slopes of small hills. ...He cannot stay away from such beautiful human life." "Life is Truth, life is Beauty, let the old body go if it wants to, he will again take birth in this beautiful earth.")

This dual discourse, of history on the one hand signifying change and decay and on the other of the truth of life in nature's lap, of its eternal cycle, is maintained in the text by the village astronomer and prophet, the old man who reads destiny by the stars and who has seen a lot to know that things are falling apart. Significantly it is in his hut that the dead patriarch's daughter-in-law, his wayward son's wife, spends her last night in the village with her son the patriarch's grandson in whom the patriarch is said to have taken rebirth, before taking her steps in search of a new life. The astronomer-prophet, we remember, is almost like a sentinel keeping an eye over the everyday flux including all out-of-the-way events ("Who is there?... who is it that goes towards the dark jungle ? Can't you hear ? Come back. ...The stars have spread out in the sky, as on all other evenings on this evening too. Pandru Disari was watching atop the high stone in front of his hut the confluence of the stars. His shape is only half visible in the blinking starlight. No movement, as if a stone. ...To himself the Disari kept saying, Sarabu Saonta,Sarabu Saonta,how could this happen:") And it is in a similar dual vein that the last discourse of the text is offered. The person now is the destitute daughter-in-law. "But what is this ? Everything seems awry - new time, new life, however hard may she hold it, her heart keeps throbbing, her lips keep trembling, tears keep rolling out of her eyes down the cheeks into the mouth – looking up at the rising sun Puyu was muttering to herself, again and again, life is full of relish and there is no death, no sorrow.

It is this dual discourse that keeps the end from turning into a 'sunrise' end. The sun certainly is rising, but it is rising as on all other days. This is where **Amrutara Santan** parts company with Manik Bandyopadhyay's **Putulnacher Itikatha** which ends on a note of despair by saying that the hero will never again have the desire to climb the sunset hill, will never again have the desire to relish life. Of course we cannot make a simple equation for the latter is a complex tale of intellect's alienation versus commitment. Probably like **Paraja, Amrutara Santan** too keeps better company with Tarasankar's fiction where life is all centred around land and where a keen sense of land is communicated. I have not had access to **Takazhi's Kayar**, but judging by report it is a tale of land, of how with the passage of time the distribution of land keeps changing. That land is still the most important aspect of our life in this country in spite of all our industrial advance and ever growing urbanisation is attested this side of Premchand to my knowledge by such other fiction texts as the Kannada **Marali Mannige** (Back to the soil) by Sivaram Karanth and the Gujarati **Malela Jiba** (Twin souls) and **Manavini Bhavai** (Man's possessions) by Pannalal Patel. And that such fiction was being written at a time when modernist tenets were beginning to gain ground in Indian literatures is also worth noting. I wish I had access to **Mati Matal**, Gopinath Mohanty's masterpiece according to some of my Oriya friends. Then I would have spoken with greater confidence about his place in the fiction in Indian languages of the last fifty years or so. But from **Paraja** and **Amrutara Santan** themselves I know that he is one of our greater writers. He might not have attempted any new narrative style and offered a fairly straight mimetic discourse. But what we get from that discourse is of such primary significance that we do not care to ask what he has done by way of poetic innovation. Besides these two texts have a special score when we consider their ideology. Directed against tribal marginalisation they have few peers. In recent Bengali we would particularly think of Mahasweta Devi whose analysis of tribal exploitation by non-tribals has drawn a

lot of attention. But perhaps Gopinath Mohanty has a more comprehensive view of tribal life even if a less analytical one.

I am not here to only propose an encomium to Gopinath Mohanty, I am also here to record the primary importance of the narration of land and life in Indian languages of the narration of the greater part of India's population. Some sixty years ago a Bengali modernist while speaking of the relative importance of the English novelists Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lewrence, in spite of what might have accorded with his professed critical tenets, recorded a preference for D.H. Lawrence for his larger grasp of life. If to narrate is to narrate man, and if to narrate man is to narrate him in relation to what provides him his primary **sustenance** and maintains life cycles, then what could be more important that this fiction in a country where alienation is still confined to a minority. Of course there is the other fiction, the fiction of urban life focussing on the growing complexity of relationships and the growing estrangement of the individual. But it is this fiction, the fiction we have been talking about, that is in line with Saratchandra and Premchand's fiction that depicted rural India and its hard realities, no matter how differently, with what amounts of idealism or realism in the discourse. We may call this fiction by different names, some 'regional', some 'community', some 'tribal' and some just 'rural', but what runs through all these varieties is a grasp of existence at the level of common humanity and of the historical processes that beset that existence.

## IV

I do not think I have done enough interliterary viewing of my Oriya texts to justify an episteme for the Indian novel, let alone Indian literature. Still the little name-droppings and juxtaposition that I have done may suggest the possibility of sharing in the patterns of discourse and mimesis. The two phases of Oriya fiction that I have looked at is one discourse-geared and the other mimesis-borne, without altogether ruling out the necessity of mimesis for the one and the presence of discourse in the other. Can we locate similar phases in the other Indian languages ? What do the texts say ? In other words, is Fakirmohan typical or is he a freak ? Is Gopinath Mohanty typical or is he a freak ? I have not suggested any causality between these phases – I picked them up absolutely to my convenience and it was far from me to propose any history of fiction in Oriya or in other Indian languages. Yet I was indicating a shift, may be an eventual shift with phases in between. How far is it true of the other Indian languages ? How far, for instance, from Hari Narayan Apte to S.N. Pendse, from, say, **Pan Lakshat Kon Gheto** (But who takes heed, 1895) to **Garembica Bapu** (The Bapu of Garambi, 1952), the one being the tale of a self-respecting woman grown up in a joint family and married off to a joint family, early widowed, self-educated, reluctant to give in to the indignities that were usually poured an upper-caste women in a traditional Hindu society, and the other being the tale of a village and its people represented by a few men and women rooted to the soil ? How far is the shift true, again, of Srinivas Das's **Pariksha Guru** (Test the teacher, 1882), the first Hindi novel, for example, to Phaniswarnath Renu's **Maila Anchal** (Dirty region, 1954), the first depicting the newly rich middle class with an emphasis on social evils in the rake of a new economy and a new education, the second, a famous 'anchalik upanyas' in Hindi, representing the multi-layered

life of a north Bihar village in the throes of change with the foundation of a hospital ? Or, how would one relate Sivaram Karanth's **Marali Mannige** back to M.S. Puttanna's **Madiddunno Maharaya** (As you sow so you reap, 1915), the first true novel in Kannada ? Or Pannalal Patel to Nandasankar Mehta's **Karan Ghelo** (Mad Karan, 1866), the first Gujarati novel ? The instances can be multiplied, but not necessarily neatly in a one to one correspondence. The point I have been trying to raise is whether, or to what extent, there was a predominance of middle class discourse in the early phase of the novel in Indian language, and whether, or to what extent, there has been a predominance of rural mimesis in a subsequent phase. Of course the novel in Indian languages is by definition by the middle class and for the middle class. Is that what largely preoccupies it in its early phase even while dealing with the life outside the middle class ? And does it in a later phase get more concerned with what it is of, whether of the middle class alone or more immediately and more urgently of that expense of life from which the middle class is being more and more alienated ? Is this in part the tale of the novel in Indian languages ? If we have an answer to this question, then, and then only, may we be able to speak of the Indian novel as such or, by extension perhaps, of Indian literature. Only then, not before.

[This written speech was delivered as third Viswaneed Lecture on the 10th January, 1993, being organised by Odia Gabesana Parishad, Cuttack. A section of this paper had been published in *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature*, Vol. 31(1993) under the title, "A Reading of Chha Mana Atha Guntha." Till now rest of the paper has remained unpublished. Pragati Utkal Sangha expresses its gratitude to Prof. Amiya Dev and the office bearers of Odia Gabesana Parishad, Cuttack for giving permission to publish the paper.

Prof. Amiya Dev is a scholar of international repute in the field of comparative literature and literary theory. He was professor of comparative literature in Jadavpur University, Kolkata for a long time. He was also the Vice-Chancellor, Vidyasagar University of West Bengal. Ed.]

# SOME WRITINGS OF MADHUSUDAN DAS

## (A) AN OBITUARY

### A CALL

What was Nandakishore – He was a great man, a hero – hero in the sense that he was an officer equal to his office. Emerson, the great American philosopher in his essay on "Use of Greatmen" says - "I admire greatmen of all classes, those stand for facts and for thoughts. I like rough and smooth, 'sourges of God' and 'Darlings of the human race' &c. &c. I applaud a sufficient man, *an officer equal to his office;* captains, ministers, senators. I like a master standing firm on legs of iron, well-born, rich, handsome, drawing all men by fascination into tributaries and supporters of his power. Sword or staff or talents sword-like or staff-like, carry on the work of the world."

Nandakisore was an able, intelligent, active and meritorious officer of high rank and position. It is through ability, tact, self-exertion, self-study, intelligence, he from mere a clerk of very low pay, rose to the exalted position of Dy. Commissioner. Is it not a great glory of Orissa for a son of her to be Political Agent, Government Agent, and Deputy Commissioner ? It is he who with his sharp intelligence, dexterity has erased out the abusive epithets "dull-headed, blockhead, stupid, foolish &c." Which were being showered upon the Oriyas some years ago. Although Nandakishore was not a patriot like Kristo Das Pal, philanthropist like Howard, religious enthusiast like Chaitanya or Kesab, politician like Prince Bismark, warrior like Alexandar the Great or Napolean Bonaparte, he was what he was – an officer equal to his office – a hero, a greatman. Was he not so ? Undoutedly the Oriya public and others of other countries, who have come in contact with him for half an hour, will answer the question in the affirmative. He had an all-embracing patronage. He was everybody's favourite and everybody was his favourite who was equal to his office. He was a very good judge of merits. People say, he has done nothing for his country. I say he has done much for his country, which the country itself knows and the Orissa Graduates and Undergraduates know. Those that have eyes will see, and ears will hear what he has done, when a comprehensive life of the hero will be before the public.

Men whose life's motto is *nil admirari*, in their eye Nandakishore will no doubt be an insignificant fellow - an ordinary worldling. But apart from partiality, and selfish judgement, he was a great man, a hero an Oriya hero. What is soceity ? Society is of individuals. If one member of the society becomes great, does he not cast lustre on the entire society ? Has he not in this respect done much for his country ? Has he not then left behind him "foot prints on the sands of time" for his country-men to trace the path to glory and fame ? We may not worship him as a great hero, patriot, warrior, religious reformer or a prophet; we may at least take him as our great guide to glory and fame – a teacher in policies; an able officer; an exalted Oriya; a countryman of high rank and position. Does he not then deserve our worship – a mourner in our hearts, a marble bust before our eyes ? It will be sheer injustice to his departed soul if we fail to contribute our quota towards the perpetuation of his sacred memory. We live by "hope, admiration and love", if a worthy countryman of ours

goes Home without being loved, lamented and landed what are we then ? – a nation of misanthropes and fatricides !!

Brethern, friends and countrymen ! should we then lie dormant by bidding simply a cold farewell to one who raised our country to a great height and exalted our nation in the eyes of other nations ? Young Orissa ! what steps are you taking for Nandakishore Bahadur ? Some years ago, when Babu Surendranath Banarjee was in Jail for contempt of Court, some of you, I remember it very well, were collecting subscriptions to release Surendranath from Jail. I then under a fictitious name "a harmless thunderbolt" asked you in the columns of the Utkal Dipika to preserve your the then wormest feelings for a future occasion in the cause of your country. Now the long expected time has at last come. The iron is hot now. Will you not strike it repeatedly to give it a shape before it grows cold.

The 19th century is an age of hero-worship. Every country worships her own hero. Why should we then not ? Are we so apathetic, cold, clownish and uncultured as to be deaf to such a call – such a sense of duty ?

Cuttack — An Oriya
13.1.94

# (B) LETTERS ON ORIYA THEATRE

## I – P.W.D. THEATRICAL CLUB

To The Editor of Utkal Dipika,

Dear Sir,

I hope these few lines will not go unnoticed and will, I am sure, find echo in the hearts of many who had the honor and pleasure to be invited to see the performance of Harish Chandra at the P.W.D. *Theateical Club.* In these days of economy and retrenchment, the pruning knife failing heavily on the P.W.D., it is a matter of no small congratulation to see our friedns of the department devote their time and money for breaking the dull monotony of Cuttack life. They have been, we dare say, eminently successful in their noble attempt and we cannot repay them better than by our very best thanks. It was a merry evening we passed and by the time we left the Club, it was well nigh 3 in the morning and we were none the worse for the time we were there almost spell-bound.

We returned home full with the delightful memory of the thin and lean but ever jolly Patanjal, the grey but grand Biswamitra, the ideal Moharaja Harish Chandra and his Majestice Queen with her charming boy, the sweet Mallika. the dutiful Kamal, the ever faithful Khagendra, and his friend the redoubtable Basant, last though not the least the rowdy Chandal who, when he was heard to march up with his fiendish cry of "I want one" and the ominous cup made of human skull hung up on his huge breast, we thought we read in his face the good old saying "vanity of vanity, all is vanity." In fact the whole scene was very impressive.

A word as regards the farce. Would it be too much if we said, it was par excellence, who could match the razor-tongued Jhee. She was really the very prodigy of a Jhee and what

a tranaition it was for us all from the sober and merry Patanjal to the fire vomiting Jhee. Then again the thrice blessed (or perhaps as he would himself say, thrice cursed,) Mr. Karterma with his accomplished beat half, whose theory of hast we carried (to its purpose though) to our old fashioned ladies at home. The young and touchy son-in-law, our Mr. Sing looking all gray, gallant but fussy in the sweet and benign presence of the charming Mrs. Karterma, who had kept her fountain of love open for all but the unfortunate. Mr. Karterma; all these, we say, we carried home with a happy memory to sleep and draw and talk to friends the following day. The stage too did not lose its charm upon us. It is a beautiful little thing and as an imprompta get up does credit to the artist's brain and his fingers as well. While we have showered all these praise which undoubtedly is well merited, we should not, as friends, omit to point out a few flaws, we should have liked to see the implacable and reverend Biswamitra a little more ascetic and less exotic in his tone and actions. His re-suscitation of Rohitasya ought to have been a little more imposing than abrupt. The scene at the Manikarnika Ghat was undoubtedly very touching but was a little too much prolonged and there was a deal of crying and breast-beating. Tears are good but fortitude is better, crying has its pathos but is not well relished, if cherished long. The orchestral arrangement was not defective but wanting which time will cure.

Taken all in all, we cannot sufficiently admire the organizing power of our friends and they have by their successful performance shown what combined efforts can accomplish in a lethargic place like Cuttack. We are also to thank our two well-known friends who received us so cordially at the Club-door. Of their copious Huka and genial smiles we carried a very pleasant memory.

## II

To The Editor of Utkal Dipika,

Sir,

You have often noticed the entertainments given by our friends of the P.W. Department. It will be ludicrous if a man like me goes to enter on a criticism of their performances so well spoken of on all hands. I beg simply to invite attention to the rapid progress in every respect during so short a time and the zeal and perseverance of our friends. We cannot sufficiently thank them for what they have done and we do not know what they will do. I take their performances as so many lectures to revive and foster the taste for drama created by Babu Ram Sunker Roy, the father of Uriya Drama. Their performances have already tempted many to think of drama in Uriya and we shall not be surprised if a Uriya *Kansa* or Rabana is killed era long. Our friends of the P.W. Department are thus doing far greater service to the Uriya literature than those who do not scruple to glorify themselves by painting Upendra Bhanja or the like in the darkest possible colour. They do not tell us that this thing or that thing is bad, that people should not see Bohu Natch but simply send cards to us to see that Prahlad is the best character conceiveable, how the prostitute Chintamoni, becomes a religious convert and how Harish Chandra sells wife and sons to keep his words. A revolution is thus being brought about silently and slowly.

So much for the Uriya literature. We cannot thank our friends sufficiently for the amusement they give at so short intervals. They break the dead monotony of the station and

give a great relief to the quil driver to whom recreation is far more benificial than half a dozen bottles of mother *Seigem's* syrup or many tolas of Makardhwaja. It is holding a candle to the sun to say more to those whose heads are full of western ideas and Natch Tomashas are among the necessaries of life as it were of the people of the east.

Our friends of the P.W. Departments have done so much for us. Are we not to entertain them in return ? It is not the etiquette. How are we to show our gratitude ? They seem to take great delight in teaching and amusing us. Is it not the best way to help them in their performances so that we may have one common amusement ? I am sorry to hear that attempt is being made to start another party. Does the station want two such things ? If not, I think it is our duty to preserve and improve that on which our friends have already spent so much money and labour. I am afraid I have grown too long so I must take here for the present.

Yours faithfully,
An Uriya.

## III

To The Editor of Utkal Dipka,

Dear Sir,

All glory to our friends of the P.W.D. Theatrical club, Merit seldom goes without its reward, and the success of the members of the club has been well earned.

The piece brought on the stage last Saturday was "Sadhaba'r Ekadasi" that master piece of the great Dinabandhu in and out it was a splendid success not withstanding certain drawbacks. The centre of all attraction, the immortal Nimchand, kept up the house cheering and roaring from beginning to end. Ever since he paralleled the 'bottom of the bottle' with the roof by begining charity from his home (if he had any) he carried the night with him till he paralleled himself on the stage floor, keeping his "mind and spirit invincible" and had had though drinking 'deep' many many a return of his vigour, which helped him to regain his vertical position and hero like pour out melodious lines from Milton and Shakespeare. Really Nim Chand was great though fallen. The prodigal Atal Behary, over whose head and neck Nim Chand was riding rough, was the son of the age, born with a luck to waste and spend a father's wealth amassed by 'well won thrift'. Backed by the inestimable boon of Nim Chand's friendships he touched wine and did so in good time. There was that matchless Kanchan, siren like, a worthy match for a ten times worthy son. Then that magnate of Eastern Bengal Ram Mayikya and Bhola the sot son-in-law, who with others made up the *cortege* of Atal, were one and all very well represented on the beautiful little stage to which, we found, there have been a great many additions since we last saw it. We will never forget the obstrusive son-in-law's comic person and his English. His "black eight days" still wrings in our ears, as much his twang which was so peculiarily his Poor Jiban Chandra, Atal's doting but foolish father was equally well represented; his grey hairs were on a worthy head and the sacred Namabali was on shoulders no less, but as ill luck would have it, were of little or no avail. Neither age grey hairs nor the threat of gore could move his Atal, who, true to his name, remained immovable in his devotion to his Jani Kanchan. The son of the age, he played his part splendidly, and so did the others; only Kanchan's muscularity was a little more than what friendly "charity" could allow.

Our friend Gokul Chundra was as good as he always is, though unfortunately Atal proved a hard nut for him. And we cannot leave behind our model mufisil Hazoor, our great Deputy Babu. Accustomed as we are very often to see birds of that feather full and fleshy, we were disappointed to see our Ghatiram Hazoor with a maximum of skin and bones and minimum of flesh, but he was none the less a Hazoor for the matter of that. Nothing daunted, though mercilessly run down by the witty Nim Chand, he kept his position aloft, at least he thought he did so. How majestically he reached his finger to the tumbler in response to Nim Chand's offer for a dose and Judhistir like only dipped his august fingers into it, fall as it was with the "invisible spirit of wine." Then his visit to Kanchan's place without 'prejudice' and Kanchan's revealing the same showed our model Hazoor of the benighted mufisil in his true color. Thanks to our days that Ghatirams are now almost extinct. If not dead, they are gone with the shadow of Nim Chand; and immortal Dinabandhu's spirit now looks down from heaven, it may be with sigh, to see that though his work remains, the heroes are gone to the.

"Undiscovered country, from whose bourne

No traveller returns'

Taken all in all, the performance was a decided success, we know that among the members of the club there is an affirnity of happy brotherhood "doing and suffering" without complaint and in the words of the all knowing Nim Chand,

"Their best conscience

Is not to leave undone but keep unknown"

They have really left nothing undone, working silently and indenedently for the entertainment of the elites of Cuttack and for which with the heartfelt thanks of the public is added a greatful one of.

An Uriya.

# (C) LETTERS FROM EGYPT

## I

To The Editor of Utkal Dipika,

Dear Sir,

I came to see the pyramids and I commence this letter seated on the doorway of the opening into the interior of the largest pyramid in Egypt. I do not expect to finish this letter here, but I hasten to jot down my feelings which the scene around was awakened in me, while yet they are fresh. A most pleasant drive on a comfortable phaeton drawn by a pair of beautiful Arabs through a shady, breeze road for a little over an hour from Cairo, brought me to the foot of the largest pyramid. This pyramid is the first the traveller meets. It stands on the border-linke between the long line of vegetation and the immense boundless desert. It stands in the border-land between life and eternity, and represents the gigantic efforts of man to save himself from the oblivious gulf of eternity which threatens to swallow him after death. Diverse have been the means which human ingenuity has invented to tide over, the

mighty rolling waves of oblivious eternity I have seem the great Cathedral at Milan (Its lofty spire accessible is height of 485 steps) with the statue of Napolean Bonaparte standing, aimed with a spear on one of the spires and looking down with a contemptuous frown on the Pope and the church which refused to recognise his regal authority When the Pope refused to crown the gieat Corsican (though he was litte Corsican) he crowned himself in this with an iron crown and completed the cathedral which had been commenced by a pious cardrinal St Cai lo The marble statue on the top was placed by Bonaparte himself to show that the sword could rise higher than piety and religion But alas ! no one takes any notice of this statue, it stands undistinguishable from the other figures around it and there is northing to attract the attention of the visitor, who visits the terrace without a previous study of the history of this cathedral Go inside the cathedral, behind the pulpit, you find a room– of solid silver, with figures of *bas and ata* relief representing the various events in the life of St Carlo and almost in the middle of the room you find a receptacle of solid silver and huge pieces of rock crystal, containing the embalmed body of the pious and self-denying cardinal who was the founder of the cathedral Ovei the body lying on its back are suspended a crown and cioss, which must be of fabulous value considering its size and lustre of the enormous diamonds, rubies and emeralds of which they are made Thousands of men daily pay homage to the receptacle only, for the body can be seen very by payment of a fee of five fiancas The body has been very well preserved, time has tried its effect on the compexion, but the cut and the contour of the face have been remarkably preserved I compared the face with an oil painting and tapestry both made in his lifetime and I have no doubt the process of embalming is veiy successful What a contrast between the figures of Bonaparte in the terrace and the body of St Carlo nside the church ! The superiority of sword over religions and piety has not been established I have also seen the marble statue of the prisoner at St Helena in the palace at Veisailles That statue represents Napolean in his dying moments. He is seated covered with a sheet in an arm chair, with deep furrows on his forehead which intense grief and anxiety had ploughed therein and as I gazed for full half an hour on that figure and thought of what I had seen in other parts of the palace– his bed tapestry which cost seven millions, his card table of mosaic work wrought with one million pieces of stones and the valuable paintings representing his heroic deeds – as I stood gazing on this statue, me thinks I was transformed into a statue and the statue started into life and whispered the last words which that great warrior said in his death-bed "I tried to found an empire by sword and there is no trace of it Jesus Christ founded an empire on love and though thousands of years have past, there are millions of men and women at this day who would lay down their lives for them " The quotation is from memory, and the words may vary, but not the sentiment

The pyramids are royal tombs reared by successive stages by a monarch by his lifetime, and after his death his memory was deposited in it and the opening was closed up The great pyramid where I am resting now was built to guaid the memory of king Cheop The pyramid is there but the king's remains have disappea ed, how or when, none can say The largest collection of memories is to be found in a museum at Turin There are some very old mummies there, perhaps King Cheops lies in one of these glass shelves, and is guarded by an Italian soldier at the entrance, while this gigantic structure which had cost 30 years

of forced labor to one hundred thousands of men serves to testify to the vanity of human wishes and hopes. The perpendicular height of this pyramid is 460 feet and its area is nearly 60,0000 square feet.

A feeling unspeakable and yet most impressive steals over his mind as the traveller stands upon the top of this wonderful monument of temporal power and spiritual vanity combined. Visions of the ages pass before the mind's eye and mighty kings and rulers whose praise fame sounded with her loudest blast, whose triumphs were engraved on marble, rise before the travellers' mind. In the midst of the immense desert lying like eternity before him the travellers' eyes are attracted by the River Nile, which meandering its course through the desert, shed life and benificence on the lands along its banks. There is a beautiful picture of a benevolent life spent in the service of humanity. If the builder of the great pyramid had stood on this stupendous fabric and studies this picture of a benevolent life and shaped life ofter it, posterity would have treated him better than he is treated now.

The Pyramid of Ghizeh — Yours truely

1.10.97 — An Uriya

## II

To The Editor, Utkal Dipika,

Dear Sir,

I am no longer on the pyramid, but in my room in a hotel.

Egypt is a place of very interest. A visit to this place was not a part of my planned out tour. I had seen France on my way to England. On my way home I travelled through Belgium, Germany, Bavaria, Switzerland and Italy. When I was in Brindisi I saw a steamer, S.S. Sutlej of the P & O. Company. On enquiry I learnt that she would start for Alexandria in 2 hours time. I made up my mind to see the land where Phareah ruled, where Joseph migrated, where infant Jesus was removed, where mummies and pyramids are found and where are to be seen clear marks of the civilization 8000 years old. There is no country in the world which has an ancient history so chequered. This country has been subject to a succession of foreign rule.

Cambyses and Darins ruled over Egypt. Alexander the great founded the city of Alexanderia, he intended it, as we knew, to be the capital of Eastern Commerce. When Cleopatra yielded life and empire to the Roman invador, Alexanderia became the second city of the Roman Empire under the Caesars. The most important event of this period is the introduction of Christianity into the country. This was followed by the Arab conquest. One of the Califs conquered Egypt and introduced the religion of Mohomed.

Within the fast decade of the last century Egypt was conquered by Napoleon.

It is now to all practical purposes a part of the British Empire under the Anglo-Turkish convention. English civilisation and English influences were introduced into the country only twelve years ago and the change that has come over the country, and the habits and mode of life of Arab is no less remarkable than interesting. The electric lights in the streets, the electric tram cars, the well-paved streets, the improved sanitation, the introduction of the

European furniture into the houses, the existence of Cafes, restaurants, hotels are the results of English influence, and the Arab values them very much. The Arab is full of praises for the English nation. The Arabs in Cairo and Alexanderia and even those in the out of the way places, have adopted the English costume with the exception of the head dress. They show an admirable natural aptitude for learning languages. In Cairo everyone almost talks English. I have met shopkeepers and tourists, guides who can talk any and all the languages of Europe, without knowing the alphabet of any. They seem to have a partiality for the French language. On going to a hotel the first man you meet is an Arab waiter (generally very dark, but occasionally as fair as a European) who accosts you "vous parley Francian monsiever" which means do you speak French. If you answer "no, I talk English" you will find the man quite up to it as well. Respectable Arab ladies are beginning to appreciate female liberty. At Cairo, I noticed ladies going out for a drive in open carriages. Nothing except the two eyes was visible, the rest of the face being veiled. I think I have already written a long latter, especially as the subject matter is of doubtful interest to newspaper readers; I shall close this letter with a brief notice of one or two things of special interest in and around Cairo. The country is teeming with interest for the student of the Bible and Koran. Within an hours drive from Cairo stands the village of Mahtareeac, where the celebrated balm of Gilead was produced after the balsams had been transplanted by Cleopatra. On his way the traveller sees what is known as the Virgin Mary tree. It is a sycamore tree (ଅଡ଼ମର) under which Joseph and Mary rested in their flight to Egypt. I had been told by several German and American travellers that it was a magnificent tree and was well worth the excursion. I confess I saw nothing magnificent in the tree. It is no doubt a very old tree. On enquiry I learnt that the original tree died in about 1550 when the present tree was planted on the site. The last fragments of the original tree are preserved in a convent at Cairo. I have serious doubts about the truth of either version of the story, but I have no doubt that the family rested there under a sycamore tree. The tree shows thousand of names cut into it by visitors. I spent a long time in examining these cruel engravings and they were exclusively the names and initials of Western nations, as was clear from the use of the Roman alphabet. Not a single letter of any of the Eastern alphabets is to be found there. The religious side of the human nature I think, gravitates towards superstition. Idolatry and superstition are synonymous. Idolatry clothes the object of worship with material things. It is the same hand of idolatry which paints with bright colors the goals of spiritual aspirations and wishes. Idolatry is the admixture of things gross with things spiritual, of things immaterial with things material. Milton was an idolator if he believed that heaven and hall were really as he described them. Europe is now in the "fin de scale" of a materialistic age and religious thought also runs in that direction. The Europeans and especially English men will stouty deny any relapse into idolatrous tendencies during recent years, but the following facts have to be explained viz. the annually increasing pilgrimage to Palestine, the increasing number of visitors to the room opposite the Roman Forum where St. Paul and St. Peter were imprisoned, the recent alterations in the furniture and arrangement of St. Paul and St. Peters (Cathedrals) in Rome, the Collection of Jewellery and massive gold, ivory and silver furniture, which have been received in the treasury of the Cathedral at Milan within the last forty years; the danger to which the big toe of St. Peters Statue (a modern one) is exposed owing to the continual hard kissing by the visitors; in a living man it would have set in inflammation, but a statue the toe is worn out to half its

original size – the erection of figures of Christ with the Cross in every part of the villages in Germany – in the open fields under shady trees. These facts and many more must be explained before one should accept the assertion that the materialistic tendency of the age has made no impression on popular religious thought. The age has, if I may use such an expression, materialized and localized religious beliefs and aspirations. The ulterior effect of this must promote the stability of religion and not its eradication a effect the materialist atheist and agnostic will very much deplore. If nearly eighteen hundred years of life under the influence of the religion, which teaches "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship him in spirit and in truth" have not been successful in eradicating superstitions from Europe, if England which in some respects is the most progressive in Europe has not got off meaningless customs, the relics of barbarous times and these are to be seen even in the House of Parliament, why should the christian missionary and the European educationalist in india wonder at the tenacity with which we cling to some of our ideas and customs the legacies of our ancestors. I fear some Englishmen out in India start with resolution to condemn everything that is Indian. The reason for that it is very difficult to assign. In Egypt the Englishman does away with his national headdress and takes to the Turkish firecap, he smokes the **hooka** at the restaurants. But you will never come across a respectable Englishman who would tolerate the **hooka** in India, though Warren Hastings used the **hooka** and in an invitation to dinner issued from the Government house, there is **nota note bene "Ladies and Gentlemen to bring their hookas."**

Cairo contains several mosques of great interest notably the one built by Tooloon. It is a copy of the Kaaba at Mecca. Then there is the mosque of Sultan Hasan with its superb ornamentation and elegant architecture. The moroque built by Mohemed Ali with its vast copula, surrounded by four demi copulas and its costly works of ornamentation on alabaster stone is certainly worth a visit. Those of our Indian Mohemedans who are very liberal in their praise of the mosques in N.W. Provinces should visit these mosques which are infinitely superior pieces of architectures to anything (except the Taj) in India. Here I must stop. If I knew letters of this nature would be acceptable to your readers, I should be happy to jot down my impression of the places I have visited. This letter will reach India on the 25th October. I may reach Bombay on the same day if I can catch S.S. Caledonia of Suez. Before I reutrn to Cuttack I intend to visit the N.W. Provinces, Bengal and probably Madras with a view to meet the native Christian population in these parts and talk to them of the proposed change in the legislation of which I wrote to you sometime ago. My idea is to have if possible a consensus of opinion on the subject and then present the thing to the Indian Council some what after the procedure of a Private Bill in the House of Commons and ask the Council to give it the force of law on the principle of Abraham versus Abraham. I have another object in visiting the N.W. Provinces and that is a very painful... to me. There is some likelihood of my getting a relapse of my old ailments when I return to Cuttack. Should this happen, I have been advised to remove for good from the place. It breaks my heart to think of this banishment from my native land and the separation from my race who have always been so kind to me. During my travel in the N.W. Provinces I wish to select a place where I could settle down, should my health necessiates a removal.

The Pyramid of Ghizeh — Yours truely
11.10.97 — An Uriya